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AN
ESSAY

ON
THE NATURE OF THE ENGLISH VERSE,
WITH
DIRECTIONS FOR READING POETRY.

J. Robertson
BY THE AUTHOR

OF THE
ESSAY ON PUNCTUATION.

MUSAS NONNULLI SACRO VENERANTUR AMORE;
PLURES INDOCTI DILACERARE SOLENT.

Incerti auctoris.

London:
PRINTED FOR J. WALTER, CHARING-CROSS,
By LUKE HANSARD,
No. 6, Great Turnstile, Lincoln's-Inn-Fields.

1799.

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THE
P R E F A C E.

AN easy and familiar treatise on the Nature of the English verse, with practical directions for reading poetry, has been long wanted for the use of schools, and those, who have formed no regular ideas on the subject.

Some learned writers * would persuade us, that our verses are composed of iambs, trochees, spondees, pyrrhics, dactyls, &c. or a mechanical arrangement of long and short syllables. This notion has involved the subject in darkness and perplexity. In the following Essay, the author has rejected all those scholastic terms, which have been used in Greek and Latin prosody, and considered the English versification as founded, not on Greek and Roman feet; but on a certain or-

* Foster on Accent and Quantity, ch. iii. &c.

der and succession of accented and unaccented syllables. This order depends on the nature of the poem; and wherever it is violated, he does not attempt to vindicate such an irregularity by classical authority, or the principles of a foreign language, with which it has no concern; but, though he allows, that such a violation of an established rule may sometimes be admitted, with a design to make the sound an echo to the sense, he presumes, that it is more frequently owing to the negligence of the poet, and sometimes to his want of taste for the harmony of numbers.

A small list of poetical names of gods, goddesses, heroes, cities, &c. is subjoined, in order to give young students some idea of the accuracy and uniformity, with which the Greek and Latin poets have ascertained the quantity of their syllables *; and to enable them to avoid those
gross

* It is very remarkable that the ancient Greek and Roman poets should agree in fixing the quantity of almost every syllable, in their respective languages, even in cases where no modern
reader

P R E F A C E.

gross and vulgar errors in pronunciation, which betray the ignorance of the speaker.

It is to be lamented, that many of our English poets have run into needless deviations from the legitimate pronunciation of ancient names, merely because the accentuation they chose to adopt, was more easily accommodated to the measure of their verse.

We smile at the foppery of the French for using such finical appellations, as Herodote, Aristote, Polybe, Denys d'Halicarnasse, Etienne de

reader can possibly ascertain the length of a syllable by any reasons, *a priori*. The Greeks paid the most scrupulous attention to their numbers. And Cicero informs us, that if a Roman actor made the smallest mistake in the measure of a verse, or the quantity of a syllable, he was hissed off the stage. *Histrion, si panlum se movit extra numerum, aut si versus pronuntiatus est syllabâ unâ brevior aut longior, exhibilatur, et exploditur, Cic. Parad. iii.* To an Englishman, who pretends to classical learning, it is a disgrace to violate the rules of prosody, and to have less taste and discernment, than the common auditors of a Roman theatre.

de Byzance, Tite Live, Suetone, Macrobe *,
 Quinte Curce, Stace, Pline, and Aulu-Gelle;
 but, let us not ourselves distort, mangle, and
 murder the venerable names of classical anti-
 quity, with the same ridiculous licentiousness.

The generality of those, who write for the in-
 struction of youth, are apt to forget, that their
 business is to accommodate their precepts to the
 lowest capacities, to readers, who are unac-
 quainted with the first principles of science.
 They seem only solicitous to display their learn-
 ing, and indulge themselves in abstruse and elab-
 orate disquisitions.

The author of the following essay has endea-
 voured to avoid this absurdity, and to place every
 minute circumstance, argument, and observation
 in the clearest light. Though the subject has
 been investigated by many preceding writers,

* Who knows, but that hereafter, the name of Macrobius
 may be written, by a farther abbreviation, in the Scotch fashion,
 Mc Robe?

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he flatters himself, that his remarks will be new to those readers, for whom they are chiefly intended; and that they are not improperly calculated to prepare the young student for higher degrees of taste and knowledge.

J. R.

Mortimer-street,
Aug. 28, 1799.

THE HISTORY OF THE

... of the ...
... and that there are two ...
... of the ...
... of the ...

...

...

ON THE NATURE
OF THE
ENGLISH VERSE.

§ I.

MANY learned writers have imagined, that the English versification is founded, like Greek and Roman poetry, on a certain combination of long and short syllables. That this is not true, will perhaps appear by a very simple experiment. Let us take a poetical line, chiefly consisting of short syllables; and, in the room of these short syllables, substitute long ones, the measure will be still preserved, though the natural quantity of the syllables is changed :

The hills and rocks attend my sylvan lay.

Pope, Past. ii. 17.

The trees and gales repeat my rural lay.

E

Or

Or if we Convert a number of long syllables
into short ones, the measure will, in the same
manner, remain unviolated :

Adiōu, ye vāles, ye mōuntains, strēams, and grōves.

Past. iv. 89.

Farewēl, ye grōts, ye fōrests, hills, and rōcks.

wyfra

OF THE ENGLISH VERSE.

§ II.

THE measure of English verse depends on a certain order and succession of accented and unaccented syllables.

The common heroic line consists of ten syllables; the first of which is generally unaccented; the second, fourth, sixth, eighth, and tenth are accented.

EXAMPLES.

Achilles' wráth, to Gréece the díreful spríng
Of wóes unnúmbér'd, héav'nly góddess, sítg;
Thát wráth, whích húrl'd to Plúto's glóomy réign
The sóuls of míghty chíefs, untímely sláin;
Whose límbs unbúry'd, ón the náked shóre,
Devóuring dógs and húngry vúltures tóre.

Il. i. 1.

Now mórn her rósy stéps, in th' eástern clíme,
Adváncing, sów'd the éarth with órient péarl.

Parad. Lost. v. 1.

The Iambic foot, among the Greeks and Romans, consisted of a short syllable, followed by a long one, as *dĩēs*. Hence our heroic verse, which is formed by an alternate succession of unaccented and accented syllables, is said, but

not with strict propriety, to be composed in the Iambic measure.

In reading all poetical lines, it is necessary to pause at every stop, in proportion to its nature and extent; that is, whether a comma, a semicolon, a colon, a period, an interrogation, or an exclamation, as we do in prose, and to proceed from point to point, with a voice properly varied and supported. Where there is *no point* in the line, there is a poetical rest, or a certain place, at which the voice should be relieved, and, as it were, take a new spring. This is usually called the *cæsura* *, and is absolutely necessary in every line of eight, ten, or twelve syllables, for the ease of the voice, which cannot be supported, to any great extent, without some difficulty.

EXAMPLES.

Judges and senates—have been bought for gold;
Esteem and love—were never to be sold.

Eff. on M. iv. 187.

Here dangling pears—exalted scents unfold;
And yellow apples—ripen into gold.

Odyf. xi. 729.

* *Cæsura*, from *cædere* to *cut*, in modern poetry, signifies a rest or pause, by which the verse is, as it were, divided into two parts, sometimes called hemistichs.

This

This rest will be more particularly explained and illustrated hereafter. See § XI.

Lay a small stress on the last syllable in the line, wherever it will bear it. This is necessary; first, because in every harmonious verse, the last syllable is in the accented place, and, in that position, every monosyllable requires the same force in pronunciation, as an accented syllable in longer words: as, the second syllable in *condemn*, *contrive*; and the third syllable in *apprehend*, *entertain*. Secondly, a small stress is necessary, because in all poetry, except blank verse, the last word in the line has a corresponding rhyme, and the sound of the former word, in that association, should leave some slight impression on the ear.

I have intimated, that the last syllable will not always bear an accent, as in the following couplets:

So on Mæander's banks, when death is nigh,
The mournful swan sings her own *elegy* *.

Dryden.

* Ov. Met. xiv. 430. This fable will be considered hereafter, under the Art. CAYSTER.

ON THE NATURE

Rais'd by these hopes, I sent no news before,
But come, without a pledge, my own *ambassadour*.

Id. *Æn.* viii. 190.

As when the mountain-oak, or poplar tall,
Or pine, fit mast for some great *admiral*.

Il. xiii. 493.

But of this frame the bearings, and the ties,
The strong connections, nice *dependencies*.

Ess. on M. i. 29.

In puns, or politics, or tales, or lies,
Or spite, or smut, or rhymes, or *blasphemies*.

Prol. to Sat. 321,

Unthought-of frailties cheat us in the wise;
The fool lies hid in *inconsistencies*.

Pope, Mor. Ess. i. 69.

He, far thy better, was foredoom'd to die;
"And thou, dost thou, bewail *mortality*?"

Il. xxi. 117.

Nothing can compensate the want of harmony in such lines as these, but the energy of the expression, or the beauty of the sentiment, which the last couplet seems to possess. Where there is neither of these excellences, the poet is inexcusable. In reading them we cannot fully comply with the rhyme, without falling into a drawling and ridiculous pronunciation. On this account, even a blank verse can scarcely end with dignity, when the last word is a polysyllable,

OF THE ENGLISH VERSE. 7

Syllable, or a word consisting of above two or three syllables.

EXAMPLES.

That to the height of this great *argument*,
I may assert eternal *providence*. P. L. i. 24.

Just confidence, and native *righteousness*. ix. 1056.

Well if thrown out as *supernumery*. x. 337.

And more that shall befall, *innumerable*. 896.

Of conscience, which the law by *ceremonies*.
xii. 297.

Provoking God to raise them *enemies*. 318.

As we cannot lay any regular accent on the last syllable in any of the foregoing lines, we can only favour the measure in some small degree, by pronouncing such polysyllables less rapidly and indistinctly than we should do in prose.

But though such words as *argument*, *righteousness*, *ceremonies*, &c. may be allowed to stand at the end of a blank verse, especially in tragedies, where the style is not so poetical and elevated, as in an epic poem, an elegant writer will seldom employ them in composing a rhyme. We have but few instances of this kind in the

works of Mr. Pope, particularly in his translation of Homer. The French and Italians frequently form their rhymes with words of four or five syllables. On this account, they "drag their flow length along," as Mr. Pope expresses it, "like a wounded snake."

In blank verse *, there are no corresponding sounds at the end of the lines, yet a small stress on the final word is necessary; first, because in this species of versification, as well as in rhyme, the accent ought to fall on the tenth syllable. Secondly, because it is necessary to shew, where the line terminates. However, in all cases, where the sense of one line runs into another, and no point can be admitted at the end of the verse, the reader should make no formal pause, nor, by any means, DROP the voice in that place; but, after the slight stress or accent above-mentioned, proceed, without interrup-

* As a lottery-ticket, which is not entitled to any prize, and a piece of white paper, which contains no writing, or some vacant spaces in a sentence, which are left for words or figures to be afterwards inserted, have been usually called blanks, so it is probable, that verses without rhyme have been styled *blank verses*, because the lines have no corresponding sound at the conclusion; and the want of that sort of harmony seems to disappoint the reader's expectation.

tion, to the next stop, or the poetical rest: as in the following lines.

He spake; and, to confirm his word, outflew
Millions of flaming swords, drawn from the thighs
Of mighty cherubim; the sudden blaze
Far round illumin'd hell. P. L. i. 663.

————— So lovely seem'd
The landscape; and of pure now purer air
Meets his approach, and to the heart inspires
Vernal delight and joy, able to drive
All sadness, but despair. Now, gentle gales,
Fanning their odoriferous wings, dispense
Native perfumes, and whisper whence they stole
Those balmy spoils. As when to them, who sail
Beyond the Cape of Hope, and now are past
Mofambic, off at sea, north-east winds blow
Sabeian odors, from the spicy shore
Of Araby the Blest; with such delay
Well pleas'd they slack their course, and many a league,
Chear'd with the grateful smell, old ocean smiles.
iv. 152.

Let it always be remembered, that, in reading, as well as in writing and printing, the different characteristics of prose and verse should be inviolably preserved; that verse should be read as verse, and prose as prose; and that if the last word of any line is passed over with the rapidity of an unaccented syllable, the measure will be totally annihilated, and the poetry absurdly

reduced to mere prose. "There are," says Dr. Johnson *, "only a few skilful and happy readers of Milton, who enable their audience to perceive, where the lines end or begin."

It may be observed, that, in the foregoing passages from the Paradise Lost, there is a pleasing variety in the pauses, a freedom from that general uniformity in the movement of the verse, which attends the precision of the couplet. In this respect, blank verse appears to have an advantage over rhyme.

* Life of Milton, p. 266.

§ III.

FOR the sake of variety, the line sometimes begins with an accented syllable.

EXAMPLES.

Ask' of thy móther éarth, why óaks are máde,
Tállér, or strónger, thán the wéeds they sháde.

Ess. on M. i. 39.

Pléas'd to the lást, he cróps the flów'ry food.

Ib. 83.

Snátch from his hánd the bálace and the ród.

Ib. 121.

Díc of a róse in áromatic páin.

Ib. 200.

Plánets and sún's run láwless thró' the sky'.

Ib. 252.

Fórm'd, and impéll'd its neíghbour tó embráce.

Ib. iii. 12.

Séme in the fíelds of púrest éther pláy.

Rape of the L. ii. 77.

Snúff, or the fán, supplíes each paúse of chát.

Ib. iii. 17.

Féar the just góds, and thínk of Scy'lla's fáte.

Ib. 122.

Plác'd at the hélm he sât, and márk'd the skies.

Odyf. v. 345.

Shóots from the stárry váult, thro' fiélds of áir.

Ib. viii. 8.

As the second is generally the accented syllable, many injudicious readers contract a habit of throwing the accent on that syllable, without regard to the small importance of the word, or the impropriety of the pronunciation. By this mechanical modification of the voice, the accent will be laid on *of, to, from, and, in, or, the, at*; and on the latter syllable, in the words *taller* and *placets*.

This absurdity should be carefully avoided; and the following rule always observed: "Not to lay a stress on an insignificant particle, or any word or syllable, which a correct and regular pronunciation does not authorize." Some exceptions must be made, which will be hereafter explained*.

§ IV.

WHEN the accent is laid on the first syllable for several lines successively, it occasions an unpleasing monotony.

EXAMPLES.

That cháng'd thro' all, and yet in all the same,
Gréat in the earth, as in th' ethereal frame;
Wárms in the sun, refreshes in the breeze,
Glóws in the stars, and blossoms in the trees,
Líves thro' all life, extends thro' all extent,
Spréads undivided, operates unspent,
Bréathes in our soul, informs our mortal part,
As full and perfect in a hair, as heart.

Eff. on M. i. 269.

It has been usually supposed *, that the monotony of these lines is owing to the uniform division of every verse, except the first and the last, at the fourth syllable. This however is not the only cause of the monotony. It is chiefly produced by the constant repetition of the accent on the first syllable.

* Webb's Remarks on Poetry, p. 8.

This will evidently appear by the following lines, in which the reader will perceive a similar monotony, though the poetical rest is varied:

Fade ev'ry blossom—wither ev'ry tree;
Die ev'ry flow'r—and perish all but she.

Pope, Past. iii. 58.

Mix'd with the vulgar—shall thy fate be found,
Piér'd in the back—a vile, dishonest wound?

Il. viii. 119.

Lives thro' all life—extends thro' all extent,
Spréads undivided—operates unspent.

Eff. on M.

Swift as a flood of fire—when storms arise,
Flóats the wide field—and blazes to the skies.

Il. ii. 948.

eff

§ V.

THE accent is sometimes laid on the first, third, fifth, and seventh syllables.

EXAMPLES.

Fairest piece of well-form'd éarth,
U'rge not thus your háughty bírth. Waller.
CÓuld we, which we néver cán,
Strétch our líves beyónd their spán;
Béauty líke a shádw flíes,
A'nd our yóuth befóre us díes.

This measure has been frequently called the trochaic verse; because, in Greek and Roman poets, the trochee was a foot, consisting of a long syllable, succeeded by a short one, as *ārmă*. But this appellation is only applicable in a figurative sense.

Verſes of this conſtruction ſometimes conſiſt of eight ſyllables, and end with a double rhyme.

EXAMPLES.

Lóvely Tháís síts beside thee ;
Táke the good the góds provide thee. Dryd.

Bácchus' bléssings áre a tréasure ;
Drínking is the sòldier's pléasure. Id.

The

The following song, by Mr. Pope, said to have been written by a person of quality, belongs to this species of versification.

Flutt'ring spréad thy púrple pínions,
Gentle Cupid, o'er my heart;
I a slave in thy dominions;
Nature must give way to art.

Mild Arcadians, ever blooming,
Nightly nodding o'er your flocks,
See, my weary days consuming,
All beneath yon flow'ry rocks.

Thus the Cyprian goddess weeping,
Mourn'd Adonis, darling youth;
Him the boar in silence creeping,
Gor'd with unrelenting tooth.

Cynthia, tune harmonious numbers;
Fair Discretion, string the lyre;
Sooth my ever-waking slumbers;
Bright Apollo lend thy choir.

Gloomy Pluto, king of terrors,
Arm'd in adamantine chains,
Lead me to the crystal mirrors,
Wat'ring soft Elysian plains.

Mournful cypress, verdant willow,
Gilding my Aurelia's brows;
Morpheus, hov'ring o'er my pillow,
Hear me pay my dying vows.

Melancholy

Melancholy, smooth Mæander,
Swiftly purling in a round,
On thy margin lovers wander,
With thy flow'ry chaplets crown'd.

Thus, when Philomela drooping,
Softly seeks her silent mate,
See the bird of Juno stooping:
Melody resigns to fate.

I have given this song at full length, because I would observe, that the author's design is grossly mistaken by many superficial readers, who think it a serious, as well as an elegant sonnet. It is a piece of exquisite humour, consisting of melodious nonsense, flowery expressions, and incoherent sentiments, calculated to ridicule those frivolous compositions, which are said to be written "by Persons of Quality."

W. H. W.

§ VI.

THE accent is sometimes placed on every third syllable. In verses constructed after this manner, the movement will be light and quick. The reason is, the number of unaccented syllables exceeds that of the accented, nearly in the proportion of two to one; and the former are more rapidly pronounced than the latter. On this account the measure is more properly adapted to lively and joyous subjects. These verses frequently admit of twelve syllables, because they have only four, which are not pronounced with rapidity.

EXAMPLES.

'Tis the voice of the sluggard, I hear him complain,
 You have wak'd me too soon, I must slumber again.
 As the door on its hinges, so he on his bed,
 Turns his side, and his shoulders, and his heavy head.

Sometimes they consist of eleven syllables:

My time, O ye muses, was happily spent,
 When Phébe went with me wherever I went*.

Spect. N^o 603.

* *My time, &c.* This beautiful poem was addressed by Dr. Byrom to Miss Joanna Bentley, the youngest daughter of Dr. Bentley, and the mother of Richard Cumberland, Esq. son to Dr. Cumberland, Bishop of Killmore, in Ireland.

See,

OF THE ENGLISH VERSE. 19

See, wild as the winds, o'er the désert he flies :
Hark ! Hæmus resounds with the baccanals cries.
Pope.

Then finish, dear Clôe, this pâstoral wår,
And lét us, like Hórace and Ly'dia, agréé ;
For thóu art a girl, as much brighter than *bér*,
As hé was a pœt sublimer than *mé* *. Prior.

Sometimes of six :

In my rage shall be sèen,
The revéngé of a quéen. Addison.

Let the loud trumpet sound,
Till the róofs all around,
The shrill échoes rebound. Pope.

The different position of these accents constitutes all that variety, which we have in our versification, in the epic line, in the song, in the Pindaric ode, &c. The first, which moves with a steady and majestic pace, requires an alternate accent. The generality of songs, or poems on sprightly and joyous subjects, have an accent on every third syllable only, which makes the verses run with more vivacity, or more levity.

* The reader will perceive, that this couplet is ungrammatical. Syntax requires, that *ber* and *me* should be *she* and *I*, which the rhyme will not admit.

§ VII.

VERSES, which have an air of ridicule, jocularity, or burlesque, sometimes consist of eleven syllables, and have a double rhyme at the end.

EXAMPLES.

There heroes' wits are kept in pond'rous *vases*,
And beaux' in snuff-boxes, and tweezer *cases*.

Rape of the L. v. 115.

To fight for ribands, if thou art so *filly*,
Mark how they grace lord Umbra, or sir *Billy*.

Ess. op. M. iv. 277.

From the dear man unwilling she must *sever*,
Yet takes one kiss, before she parts for *ever*.

Epist. 1. M. B. 5.

And he, who now to sense, now nonsense *leaning*,
Means not, but blunders round about a *meaning*.

Prol. to Sat. 185.

Such verses frequently consist of nine syllables:

Yet, to his guest though no way *sparing*,
He eat himself the rind and *faring*.

Pope, Imit. of H. vi. 169.

And

And 'tis but just, I'll tell you *wherefore*,
You give the things you never *care for*.

Ib. vii. 33.

Call fire, and sword, and *desolation*,
A godly—thorough *reformation*.*

Hudib. c. i. 2017

Sometimes of seven:

ODE from ANACREON.

In roses Cupid *peeping*,
Disturb'd a bee a *sleeping*;
Nor spy'd it, e're it stung him;
The smart so sorely wrung him,
His precious tears he wasted,
And straight to Venus hasted.

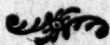
I'm kill'd! O mother! crying,
I'm kill'd! I'm just a dying!
No chance was ever sadder,
A tiny winged adder,
A bee by peasants named,
My finger has inflamed!

If for a bee to sting thee,
Quoth she, such trouble bring thee;
Think, Cupid, how confounded,
Are those, whom thou hast wounded!

Lewis's Misc. Poems, vol. 1. 305.

* A crazy politician of the present day, with a little alteration of these Hudibrastic lines, may

Call fire, and sword, and desolation,
A WISE and GLORIOUS reformation.



§ VIII.

WHEN the accent falls on significant words, or proper syllables, the verse, though consisting of ten words, is not inharmonious.

EXAMPLES.

For while I sit with thee, I seem in heav'n.

P. L. viii. 210.

Arms and the man I sing, who forc'd by fate.

Dryd. Æn. i. 1.

No bird so light, no thought so swift as they.

Odyf. vii. 48.

What bark to waft me, and what wind to blow.

Ib. x. 597.

Thrice in my arms I strove her shade to bind.

Ib. xi. 249.

Shuns the dire rocks; in vain she cuts the skies;

The dire rocks meet, and crush her as she flies.

Ib. xii. 77.

He knew his lord, he knew and strove to meet;

In vain he strove to crawl, and kiss his feet.

Ib. xvii. 360.

Till t'rd he sleeps, and life's poor play is o'er.

Est. on M. ii. 282.

And

OF THE ENGLISH VERSE. 23

And the last pang shall tear thee from his heart.

Id. Elegy.

No fly' me, fly' me, far as póle from póle.

Eloisa, 289.

Ah, come not, write not, think not on'ce of mé,

Nor share one pang of áll I félt for thee. Ib. 291.

These examples may be sufficient to shew the error of those writers, who have asserted, that ten monosyllables cannot constitute an harmonious verse. There cannot be smother or more expressive lines, than those, which I have cited from the works of Mr. Pope.

It must however be allowed, that if there be ten words in a line, and most of them equally significant, or equally entitled to an accent, the line will run heavily. Mr. Pope has given us the following memorable verse to this effect:

And ten low words oft creep in one dull line*.

Ess. on C. 347.

The slow movement of this line is not occasioned by the number, or the "lowness" of the words; but by the much greater proportion of

* It seldom happens, says Dryden, but a monosyllable line turns verse to prose, and even that prose is rugged and unharmonious.

Dedicat. of the *Æneis*.

such

such as require some degree of accentuation, or force of enunciation. In the foregoing verse, there are eight significant words, and only two, which may be passed over with the rapidity of unaccented syllables, namely, *and* and *in*.

The same observation may be made on these lines :

And when up ten slope steps you've dragg'd your thighs.

Id. Eth. Ep. iv. 131.

Rocks, caves, lakes, fens, bogs, dens, and shades of death.

P. L. ii. 621.

To illustrate the preceding remark, with more precision, let us take ten monosyllables, which require an *equal force* of accentuation; and we shall find, that they do not form the least degree of poetical harmony :

One, two, three, four, five, six, sev'n, eight, nine, ten.



§ IX.

WHEN the accented syllable happens to be an insignificant particle, or a syllable; on which the voice cannot properly rest, the verse is lame and inharmonious.

EXAMPLES.

This nymph to *the* destruction of mankind.

Rape of the L. ii. 19.

Th' advent'rous baron *the* bright locks admir'd.

Ib. 29.

Is the great chain, that draws all *to* agree.

Eff. on M. i. 33.

Or which must end me, *a* fool's wrath or love.

Prol. to Sat. 30.

When victims *at* yon altar's foot we lay.

Eloisa, 108.

And heighten'd *by* the diamond's circling rays.

Rape of the L. iv. 115.

While angels *with* their silver wings o'er shade.

Pope, Eleg. 67.

Starting from sleep with *a* distracted air.

Il. v. 502.

Transpierc'd his back with *a* dishonest wound.

Il. xiii. 691.

C

Talhybius

Talthybius *and* Eurybates the good. Il. i. 421.

Each *word-catcher*, that lives on syllables.

Prol. to Sat. 166.

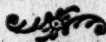
Burnt after *them* to the *bottomless* pit.

P. L. vi. 866.

As a despite done *against* *the* most high.

Ib. 906.

If in reading the foregoing lines we were to follow the poet's erroneous accentuation, our pronunciation would be ridiculous.



§ X.

THE structure of the verse is irregular, when the poetical and the oratorical accent do not perfectly coincide.

EXAMPLES.

His own works and *their* works at once to view.

P. L. iii. 59.

Drew after *him* the third part of heav'n's host.

V. 710.

Over *his* foes and thine, there shall surprise.

xii. 453.

The god; the god, revenges by *my* hands.

Odys. ix. 864.

The court is joyless, for thou *art* not there.

Ib. xi. 227.

§ XI.

MR. POPE has observed, that "in every
" smooth verse of ten syllables, there is naturally
" A PAUSE at the fourth, fifth, or sixth syllable*." This pause is independent on those points or stops, which the rules of punctuation require.

A pause on the fourth syllable :

Why rove my thoughts—beyond this last retreat ?
Why feels my heart—its long forgotten heat ?

Eloisa, 5.

No rich perfumes—refresh the fruitful field,
Nor fragrant herbs—their native incense yield.

Past. iv. 47.

When not a breath—disturbs the deep serene ;
And not a cloud—o'ercasts the solemn scene.

Il. viii. 639.

On the fifth syllable :

Where awful arches—make a noon-day night,
And the dim windows—shed a solemn light.

Eloisa, 143.

* Let. to Mr. Walsh, vi.

OF THE ENGLISH VERSE. 29

Me glory summons—to the martial scene:
The field of combat—is the sphere for men.

Il. vi. 634.

On the sixth:

And white-rob'd innocence—from heav'n descends.

Messiah, 20.

Who finds not Providence—all good and wise
Eff. on M. i. 205.

Why Jove's satellites—are less than Jove.

Ib. 42.

Then from his closing eyes—thy form shall part.
Elegy, 79.

Speed the soft intercourse—from soul to soul.

Eloisa, 57.

On the seventh:

And in the smooth description—murmur still.

And universal darkness—buries all.

Dunc. vi. 656.

A needless Alexandrine—ends the song.

Eff. on C. 356.

Or in the full creation—leave a void.

Eff. on M. ii. 243.

High in the dusty whirlwind—scales the heav'n.

Il. v. 1063.

Verſes, divided in this manner, do not often occur in the works of Mr. Pope. He himſelf, in the letter already cited, does not mention any ſmooth verſe, having the pauſe on the ſeventh ſyllable. The former part is too long, in proportion to the latter. In the preceding examples, the voice cannot properly reſt on the adjectives ſmooth, univerſal, needleſs, full, duſty; for then the pauſe would ſeparate them from the nouns, with which they are immediately connected.

The variety and harmony of Engliſh verſification, in a great meaſure, depend on the judicious change and management of this pauſe. If it be made after the ſame ſyllable for ſeveral lines ſucceſſively, it occasions a tireſome monotony.

On this account, a verſe of twelve ſyllables, uſually called an Alexandrine *, if it is frequently introduced,

* The learned Heumannus ſuppoſes, that this title is derived from Aleſſandria, or Alexandria, a city of Italy, in the dutchy of Milan, where verſes of this ſort were firſt introduced. " Mihi perſuaſi, Alexandrinum carminis genus ab urbe Italiæ Alexandria, vocatum eſſe, tanquam primâ iſtiusmodi verſuum officinâ. Quanquam et audire par eſt Gallos, ſuæ nationi arrogantes inventionis gloriam. Ac Ludovicus le Gendre, in
Novâ

introduced, is disagreeable to the ear; because in a line of that extent, it becomes necessary to place the cæsural pause constantly and uniformly on the sixth syllable, or to divide the verse into two equal parts.

The Alexandrine may be sometimes admitted into heroic, or Pindaric verses, in order to give

Novâ suâ Historiâ Galliæ, narrat, poema quoddam Latinum, cui *Alexandreis* titulus (haud dubiè innuit opus Phil. Gualteri) Gallicis fuisse versibus redditum à Gulielmo le Court et Alexandro Parisiensi; hujusque versionis singulos versus constistisse duodecim syllabis; hinc factum esse, ut postea hujus generis versus nominarentur *Alexandrini*, sive à nomine unius interpretum, sive ab Alexandro M. versibus illis laudato."

"It is my opinion, that the Alexandrine verse derives its name from Alexandria, a city of Italy, where verses of this kind were first composed. Though it may be proper to hear what is asserted by French writers, who ostentatiously ascribe the glory of the invention to their own nation. M. le Gendre, in his History of France, relates, that a Latin poem, entitled, *Alexandreis* (alluding undoubtedly to the work of Philip Gualther, or Gautier de Chatillon) was translated into French verse by William le Court, and Alexander of Paris; that every verse of this translation consisted of twelve syllables, and that afterwards verses of this sort were called Alexandrine, either from the name of one of the translators, or from Alexander the Great, the hero of the poem." Heum. Consp. Reip. Lit. c. v. § 16.—Cave, Hist. Lit. vol. ii. 247.—Ladvoeat. ART. Alexandre.—Sandii Not. in Vossium, p. 374.—Saxius places Ph. Gualter, at the Year 1176.

them, on proper occasions, a "long, majestic march;" but Mr. Pope very justly ridicules the frequent repetition of this measure, when he says,

A needless Alexandrine ends the song,
That, like a wounded snake, drags its slow length along.
Ess. on C. 356.

It is probable, that the author of the Essay on Criticism had Dryden in his view, when he wrote these lines; for the latter has indulged himself immoderately in this poetic licence*.

Many of our ancient poets wrote whole poems in verses of twelve syllables. Thus Drayton†:

Of

* See Dryden's translation of Virgil, *Æn.* vi. 944—967, where the Alexandrine occurs no less than six times in 24 lines. It is a little remarkable, that two of Mr. Pope's verses, almost immediately preceding his censure of the Alexandrine line, bear a strong resemblance to a couplet in Dryden's translation of the foregoing passage:

A sep'rate grove, thro' which a gentle breeze
Plays with a passing breath, and *whispers thro' the trees.*
Æn. vi. 954.

Where'er you find the cooling western "breeze,"
In the next line, "it whispers thro' the trees."

Ess. on C. 350.

† Michael Drayton was born at Harfoll, or Hartshill, in Warwickshire, in 1563. He published the first part of his *Polyolbion*

Of all the Cambrian shires—their heads that bear so high,
And far survey their soils—with an ambitious eye,
Mervinia for her hills—as for their matchless crouds,
The nearest that are said—to kiss the wand'ring clouds,
Especial audience craves—offended with the throng,
That she of all the rest—neglected was so long.

Poly-Olbion.

The reader will observe, that the pause in these lines is uniformly placed on the sixth syllable. This languid measure is now antiquated, and no longer employed in English versification. The French however still retain it.

“The best French verses,” says F. Buffier *,
“are composed of twelve syllables : as,

“Du souverain des cieux constant adorateur,

“Portez sa loi toujours au fond de votre cœur.”

“These verses of twelve syllables are chiefly used, where the subject is elevated, as in heroic poems and tragedies, whence they take the name of heroic verses.”

Polyolbion in 1613, and the second in 1622, making in all thirty books, or songs, containing a chorographical description of England and Wales. The title of this work, Πολυολβιον, signifies *perbeatum*, *very happy*; and bears an allusion to Albion, the ancient name of this island. Drayton died in 1631.

* Buffier on the Rules of French Poetry, c. 1.

A Frenchman undoubtedly perceives a peculiar sweetness and elevation in these twelve syllables, uniformly divided by a pause in the middle. But such verses are insufferably fatiguing to an English ear *.

Whatever may be the number of syllables in a poetic line, it should always be remembered, that the cæsura should coincide, as much as possible, with the pause in the sense, or in the structure of the sentence.

Unless the reader attend to this poetical rest, he can have no just notion of the nature of English poetry; nor can he read it with any propriety.

It is a fortunate circumstance, that our modern poets have agreed to extend the heroic

* It is universally allowed, that the French versification labours under great disadvantages. The judicious M. Rollin observes, that "to divide the Alexandrine line into exact hemistichs, to make a kind of stop after the three first feet, to have a regular rhyme at the end of the three last, and to proceed, exactly in the same method, in all the verses following, must be liable to tire the reader's attention soon, unless supported and reinforced by other beauties, sufficient to cause this perpetual monotony to be forgotten," Rollin on Bell. Let. vol. i. b. 2. c. 2.

line no farther than ten syllables. On this account, it is properly adapted to the human voice, which may proceed from point to point, or, where there is no intervening stop, from the cæsural pause to the end of the line, with ease and vivacity; and, at the same time, avoid the disgusting habit of uniformly dropping the voice, when the breath is exhausted, at the end of every verse, or every couplet.

cut

§ XII.

THERE is a remarkable beauty in the English language, not equally conspicuous in any other; that is, a striking resemblance between the sound of certain words, and their signification. We have innumerable instances of this kind*: as, the roaring lion, the growling bear, the croaking raven, the grunting swine, the bellowing bull, the hissing serpent, the rattling car, the tinkling bell, the clashing swords, the clanging arms, the tottering ruin, the whizzing arrow, the twanging bow-string, the whistling wind, the crackling flames, the sparkling fire-brand, the glittering stars, the flashing lightning, the rumbling thunder.

It is well known, that Homer, Virgil, and other ancient poets, have happily accommodated their numbers to the facts they describe, and made the sound of the words an echo to the

* Dr. Wallis has given us a copious collection of English words, "*quorum soni sunt rerum indices*," the sound of which suggests to the mind of the reader a striking idea of their signification, Gram. p. 148, ed. 1765.

sense. Some of our best poets have very successfully imitated this poetical beauty. Thus Milton describes the almost instantaneous motion of the angels:

Light, as the lightning glimpse, they ran, they flew.
P. L. vi. 642.

The quick movement of this line will appear more conspicuous, when contrasted with the following representation of the mountains, rising up slowly and heavily, and with a seeming difficulty, at the creation:

Immediately the mountains huge appear,
Emergent; and their broad, bare backs upheave.
vii. 285.

Or with this description of the sea-monsters, rolling in the ocean:

Part huge of bulk,
Wallowing, unwieldy, enormous in their gait,
Tempest the ocean.
vii. 410.

The opening of the infernal doors is admirably represented in these sonorous verses:

On a sudden open fly,
With impetuous recoil, and jarring sound,
The infernal doors, and on their hinges grate
Harsh thunder.
i. 379.

On

On the other hand, the gates of heaven move with an agreeable facility :

————— Heav'n open'd wide
Her ever-during gates, harmonious found
On golden hinges moving. vii. 205.

The infernal gates had no such harmony ; they grated harsh thunder, that shook the bottom of Erebus.

We have a remarkable instance of this kind of poetical excellence in the *Odyssey*. Homer represents Sisyphus rolling up a stone to the top of a mountain, where it is no sooner placed, than it tumbles to the bottom. The translator, Mr. Pope, or Mr. Broome *, has imitated the original with great success:

I turn'd my eye, and, as I turn'd, survey'd
A mournful vision, the Sisyphian shade.
With many' a weary step, and many' a groan,
Up the high hill, he heaves a huge round stone.
The huge round stone, resulting with a bound,
Thunders impetuous down, and smokes along the
ground. Odyf. xi. 733.

* Mr. Broome translated eight books of the *Odyssey*, namely, the 2. 6. 8. 11. 12. 16. 18. 23. Mr. Fenton, the 1. 4. 19. 20. Mr. Pope, the other twelve. But what corrections or improvements he made in the productions of his assistants it is impossible to determine.

The fourth line consists of ten monosyllables, seven of which have the force of accented syllables; and what more particularly contributes to the slow movement of the verse, five of these words, namely, *high, hill, he, heaves, huge*, begin with an asperate. The word *resulting* expresses the rapidity, with which the stone bounds over all obstructions; and the last verse, which consists of twelve syllables, describes the continued celerity of its descent.

Mr. Pope, in his translation of the Iliad, describes the slow march of mules, and the rattling of carts, in these expressive lines:

First march the heavy mules, securely slow,
O'er hills, o'er dales, o'er crags, o'er rocks they go.
Jumping, high o'er the shrubs of the rough ground,
Rattle the clatt'ring cars, and the shockt axles bound.

Il. xxiii, 140.

Immediately afterwards, the noise of the woodman's axe, and the falling of the trees, is strongly impressed on the reader's imagination by the sound of the verses:

Loud sounds the axe, redoubling strokes on strokes;
On all sides round the forest hurls her oaks
Headlong. Deep echoing groan the thickets brown;
Then rustling, crackling, crashing, thunder down.

Ib. 146.

In

In the following couplet the stillness of the sea is described, in numbers particularly smooth and flowing:

Some demon calm'd the air, and smooth'd the deep,
Hush'd the loud winds, and charm'd the waves to sleep.
Odyf. xii. 205.

On the contrary, the roaring of the water is described in verses, as rough and sonorous, as that turbulent element.

While the tide rushes from her rumbling caves,
The rough rock roars, tumultuous boil the waves.
Ib. 282.

In the following light, easy numbers the poet represents a fleet, flying over the ocean before the wind:

The fleet swift-tilting o'er the surges flew.
Odyf. iv. 797.

And the same objects, in other places:

So mounts the bounding vessel o'er the main.
Odyf. xiii. 101.

Above the bounding billows swift they flew.
Il. i. 628.

And when along the level seas they flew.
Il, xx. 272.

How

How could thy soul, by realms and seas disjoin'd,
Outfly the nimble sail, and leave the lagging wind?
Odyf. xi. 73.

We drop our oars; at ease the pilot guides;
The vessel light along the level glides. xii. 187.

In describing a calm, Mr. Dyer, the author
of the Fleece, says:

While ev'ry zephyr sleeps, then the shrouds drop.

And in another passage:

————— With easy course,
The vessels glide, unless their speed be stopp'd
By dead calms, that oft lie on those smooth seas.

Here the author has carried his poetical imitation to excess; perhaps we may say, to some degree of affectation.

The reader may probably apply this observation to several other passages, which I have here produced. Let him enjoy his opinion. I will not pretend to assert, that even Mr. Pope is, at all times, equally happy in the use of this poetical ornament.

The same incomparable translator thus describes the whistling of the winds:

The

The whistling winds already wak'd the sky;
Before the whistling winds the vessels fly.

Odyf. iii. 213.

The wild winds whistle, and the billows roar;
The splitting raft the furious tempest tore.

vii. 357.

A company of dancers:

Light bounding from the earth, at once they rise,
Their feet half-viewless quiver in the skies.

viii. 303.

Venus dancing with an easy motion, something like that of a minuet:

Such Venus shines, when, with a measur'd bound,
She smoothly gliding, swims th' harmonious round.

xviii. 229.

Grains of corn leaping, like hailstones, on a barn-floor:

While the broad fan with force is whirl'd around,
Light leaps the golden grain, resulting from the ground.

Il. xiii. 741.

A hero plunging into a river:

His feet upborne scarce the strong flood divide,
Slidd'ring and stagg'ring.

Il. xxi. 266.

The sound of a trumpet:

As the loud trumpet's brazen mouth from far,
With thrilling clangor, sounds th' alarm of war.

Il. xviii. 259.

A drunken

A drunken man :

Stagg'ring I reel'd, and as I reel'd I fell,
Lux'd the neck joint ; my soul descends to hell.

Odyf. xi. 79.

The gliding of Juno and Minerva through the
air :

Thence to relieve the fleeting Argive throng,
Smooth as the sailing doves, they glide along.

Il. v. 970.

A man overwhelmed with grief :

At ev'ry note his tears responsive flow ;
And his great heart heaves with tumultuous woe.

Odyf. viii. 588.

A man spent with fatigue, and almost deprived
of breath :

His swoln heart heav'd ; his bloated body swell'd.

v. 583.

A person suppressing the effusions of sorrow :

Her bosom labour'd with a boding sigh ;
And the big tear stood trembling in her eye.

Il. vi. 508.

The big round tear hung trembling in his eye.

Odyf. ii. 91.

A per-

A person struck with horror :

Astonish'd at the sight, aghast I stood ;
And a cold fear ran shiv'ring thro' my blood.

xi. 55.

He said; chill horrors shook my shiv'ring soul.

iv. 725.

A coward in the agonies of fear :

A sudden palsy seiz'd his turning head ;
His loose teeth chatter'd, and his colour fled.

Il. x. 445.

A pugilist, battered and bruised in a severe
contest :

Whose loose head tott'ring, as with wine oppress'd,
Obliquely drops, and nodding knocks his breast.

Odyf. xviii. 281.

A superannuated warrior in the field of bat-
tle :

Tho' now unfit an active war to wage,
Heavy with cumb'rous arms, stiff with cold age.

Il. xiii. 648.

Till faint with labour, and by foes repell'd,
His tir'd, slow steps he drags from off the field.

Ib. 652.

A minor poet, buffeting his brain in com-
posing verses :

Just

Just writes to make his barrenness appear,
And strains, from hard-bound brains, eight lines a
year. Pope, Prol. to Sat. 181.

A humble genius of the same kind :

She saw slow Philips creep, like Tate's poor page.
Dunc. i. 105.

A long continued motion, by a verse of twelve
syllables :

Then prone on ocean in a moment flung,
Stretch'd wide his eager arms, and shot the seas along.
Odys. v. 477.

Joyful they see applauding princes gaze,
When stately in the dance you swim th' harmonious
maze. Odys. vi. 187.

Wide, and more wide, the floating rings advance,
Fill all the wat'ry plain, and to the margin dance.
Pope, Temple of F. 440.

The beautiful simile of the pebble, from which
these lines are taken, seems to have made a strong
impression on the imagination of Mr. Pope. It
appears in Silius Italicus, lib. xiii. 29, where it
is expressed with wonderful accuracy and ele-
gance. The Latin is almost literally translated
in the Temple of Fame, and the Essay on Man,
iv. 364. and slightly touched in the Dunciad, ii.
1405. Shakespeare has given us a faint and trans-
ient

ient view of the same image. It was reserved for the excellent poet I have quoted, to do complete justice to the following lines :

Signa reportandi crescebat in agmine fervor.
Sic ubi perumpit stagnantem calculus undam,
Exiguos format per prima volumina gyros ;
Mox tremulum vibrans motu gliscente liquorem,
Multiplicat crebros sinuati gurgitis orbes :
Donec postremò laxatis circulus oris
Contingat geminas patulo curvamine ripas *.

A continued rapidity, with a sudden stop :

As from some mountain's craggy forehead torn,
A rock's round fragment flies, with fury borne ;
From steep to steep the rolling ruin bounds ;
At ev'ry shock the crackling wood resounds ;
Still gath'ring force, lit smokes, and urg'd amain,
Whirls, leaps, and thunders down, impetuous to the
plain.

There stops.

Il. xiii. 191.

This noble simile represents the furious descent of Hector from the Grecian wall. The crackling of the woods, the shock, the noise, the rapidity, the irresistibility of the stone, the augmen-

* See a more particular account of these passages, by the author of this essay, in the *Gent. Mag.* for Jan. 1792, and in the *Crit. Rev.* for May 1766, where Mr. Pope's imitation of the Latin poet was, I believe, first pointed out.

tation of its force as it rolls, and its sudden stop, when it reaches the plain, are presented to the reader's imagination in the most lively and animated language.

The dead fall of a heavy animal, and other similar incidents:

Down sunk the heavy beast; the females round.
Odys. iii. 572.

Down rush'd the night. East, west, together roar.
v. 371.

The sapp'd foundations by thy force shall fall,
And whelm'd beneath thy waves, drop the huge wall.
Il. vii. 553.

On all sides round the forest hurls her oaks
Headlong. Il. xxiii. 147.

We have a very natural and striking image of the same kind in Paradise Lost, where Milton represents the astonishment of Adam, when he had heard Eve relate the story of her transgression:

From his slack hand the garland, wreath'd for Eve,
Down dropt—and all the faded roses shed.
ix. 892.

The breaking of a sword in an encounter:

The brittle steel, unfaithful to his hand,
Broke short. Il. iii. 447.

The

The verse is abrupt at the second syllable, to express, the snapping of the sword.

The twanging of a bow-string, and the whizzing of an arrow :

From his essaying hand the string let fly,
Twang'd short and sharp, like the shrill swallow's
cry. *Odyf. xxi. 443.*

The whizzing arrow vanish'd from the string.
Ibid. 461.

Th' impatient weapon whizzes on the wing ;
Sounds the tough horn, and twangs the quiv'ring
string. *Il. iv. 156.*

Mr. Pope, who better than any man understood the art of adapting the sound of his verses to the facts he describes, has given us some more extensive and remarkable examples to this effect :

P*. What ! like Sir Richard †, rumbling, rough, and
fierce,
With arms, and George, and Brunswick, croud the verse,
Rend with tremendous sound your ears asunder,
With gun, drum, trumpet, blunderbuss, and thunder ?

* By the letter P. the poet means himself; and by F. Mr. Fortescue, to whom this satire is addressed.

† Sir Richard Blackmore, knight, was one of the physicians in ordinary to king William, and queen Anne; the author of six epic poems, and many other productions. He died in 1729.

Or nobly wild, with Budget's fire and force,
 Paint angels trembling round his falling horse?
 F. Then all your muse's softer arts display;
 Let Carolina smooth the tuneful lay;
 Lull with Amelia's liquid name the nine,
 And sweetly flow through all the royal line.

Imit. of Hor. ii. 1. 23.

In his Essay on Criticism, speaking of the infipid smoothness, which some readers admire, he says :

These equal syllables alone require,
 Tho' oft the ear the open vowels tire;
 While expletives their feeble aid do join;
 And ten low words oft creep in one dull line.

The hiatus, or gaping of the vowels, in the second line, the expletive *do* in the third, and the ten monosyllables in the fourth, are admirable illustrations of the poet's remark.

He adds,

'Tis not enough no harshness gives offence,
 The sound must seem an echo to the sense.
 Soft is the strain, when zephyr gently blows,
 And the smooth stream in smoother numbers flows;
 But when loud surges lash the sounding shore,
 The hoarse, rough verse should like the torrent roar.
 When Ajax strives some rock's vast weight to throw,
 The line too labours, and the words move flow*.

* Il. xii. 378, &c. Il. xiv. 410, &c.

Not so, when swift Camilla scours the plain,
 Flies o'er th' unbending corn, and skims along the
 main *.

Ess. on Crit. 363.

In these verses the fourth line emphatically expresses the gliding of a gentle stream. The sixth, the roaring of the sea in a storm, or the noise of a turbulent and impetuous torrent; the eighth, the labour of Ajax, when he attempts to heave the ponderous fragment of a rock; and the last, the agility and the swiftness of Camilla. It must however be allowed, that "*scouring* the plain," is not a happy expression.

The celebrated Dr. Johnson seems to have questioned the existence of this poetical beauty in the preceding passage.

"From these lines (he says) laboured with great attention, may be judged, what can be expected from the most diligent endeavours after the imagery of sound. The verse, intended to represent the whisper of the vernal breeze, must be confessed not much to excel in softness or volubility; and the smooth stream runs with a perpetual clash of jarring consonants. The noise and turbulence of the torrent is indeed distinctly

* Virg. *Æn.* vii. 808.

imaged; for it requires very little skill to make our language rough. But in the lines, which mention the effort of Ajax, there is no particular heaviness, obstruction, or delay. The swiftness of Camilla is rather contrasted than exemplified. Why the verse should be lengthened to express speed, will not easily be discovered. In the dactyls, used for that purpose by the ancients, two short syllables were pronounced with such rapidity, as to be equal only to one long, therefore naturally exhibit the act of passing through a long space in a short time. But the Alexandrine, by its pause in the midst, is a tardy and stately measure; and the word *unbending*, one of the most sluggish and slow, which our language affords, cannot much accelerate its motion." Rambler, N^o 92.

It has been already observed *, that in every verse, wherein the words, that require some degree of accentuation, exceed those in number, which may be passed over with the celerity of unaccented syllables, the movement will be proportionably retarded. In the verse, which mentions the effort of Ajax,

The line *too* labours, and the words *move* slow.

* § VI. and VIII.

there are, besides the five accented syllables, which form the usual measure, some others, namely, *too* and *move*, which throw an additional incumbrance on the line, by their languor and significance. Here then we have seven tardy syllables, and only three of a contrary quality. In consequence of this disproportion, there is certainly a very perceptible slowness in the foregoing line.

The same principle, I think, is calculated to determine every question of a similar kind.

It is true, there is no disputing about taste; yet surely every impartial and intelligent reader must allow, that the preceding observations of the learned author are hypercritical; and that if we do not perceive in Mr. Pope's lines a happy correspondence between the sound of the words, or the flowing of his numbers, and the images he describes, it will be in vain to search for it in any other modern author.

We may however be fully satisfied, that this correspondence is not always the mere illusion of a capricious fancy; but a real and perceptible excellence. The severest critics admire it in Homer and Virgil; and he can have no taste,

who does not perceive it in Milton and Pope. I freely acknowledge, that this kind of imitation may be carried to a ridiculous extent, yet he must be a despicable poet, who never attempts to make his numbers harmonize with the subject; who represents a rapid torrent by a languid line; rural scenes, in words that resemble the clangor of a trumpet; the tumult of a battle, and the clash of arms, in soft, mellifluous numbers; and the gentle whispers of sentimental love*, in the rough, uncourtly style of a rustic †.

I have already observed, that poets may easily exceed the bounds of propriety. A judicious writer, on the subject we are now considering, seems to think, that Dryden has fallen into this error, when he thus describes the rumbling of drums:

The double, double, double beat
Of the thund'ring drum
Cries, hark! the foes come.

* Propertius says very properly,

Carmina mansuetus lenia querit amor.

Prop. i. 9.

Endearing love requires a gentle strain.

† Trapp, *Præf. iv. p. 121.*

The sounds, he says, should be always in accord with the sense ; but they should accompany, not mimic it *.

On the other hand, an excellent judge of poetry remarks, that the first stanza in Mr. Pope's Ode on St. Cecilia's Day is the finest piece of this kind perhaps extant in any language : it is itself a perfect concert †.

Descend, ye nine, descend and sing ;
 The breathing instruments inspire ;
 Wake into voice each silent string,
 And sweep the sounding lyre !
 In a sadly-pleasing strain,
 Let the warbling lute complain—
 Let the loud trumpet sound,
 'Till the roofs all around
 The shrill echoes rebound—
 While, in more lengthen'd notes, and slow,
 The deep, majestic, solemn organs blow.—
 Hark ! the numbers soft and clear,
 Gently steal upon the ear ;
 Now louder, and yet louder rise,
 And fill with spreading sounds the skies.—
 Exulting in triumph now swell the bold notes,
 In broken air, trembling, the wild music floats—

* Webb's Remarks on Poetry, p. 52.

† Spence's Ess. on the Odyf. Dial. iii.

'Till, by degrees, remote and small,
The strains decay,
And melt away,
In a dying, dying fall*.

* It may not perhaps be improper to observe, that the last word in this stanza, is not a verb, but a noun.

§ XIII.

SOME archaisms and peculiarities * in Milton's versification.

Milton frequently lays the accent on syllables, which are not accented, at present, in common pronunciation.

EXAMPLES.

Who now *triumphs*, and in th' excess of joy.

P. L. B. i. 123.

Next Chemos, th' *obscene* dread of Moab's sons.

406.

And fat as princes, whom the *supreme* king.

735.

On Lemnos, th' *Æ'gean* isle; thus they relate.

746.

* Only SOME of the following instances of an unusual accentuation are *peculiar* to Milton. Many of them frequently occur in our ancient poets, particularly in Shakespeare, where we may find a thousand similar examples. But the author of the present Essay chose to confine his observations, on this point, to the *Paradise Lost*, as it is commonly put into the hands of young readers.

OF THE ENGLISH VERSE. 57

Encamp their legions, or with *obscure* wing.
ii. 132.

Our *supreme* foe in time may much relent.
210.

Of *mankind* in one root, and earth with hell.
ii. 383. ix. 415.

Mr. Pope, according to the usual pronunciation, accents *mankind* on the second syllable :

The proper study of *mankind* is man.
Eff. on M. ii. 1.

In *confus'd* march forlorn, th' adventrous bands.
615.

Diurnal, or this less *volúbil* earth. iv. 593.

Spirits *odorous* breathes, flow'rs, and their fruit.
v. 482.

Thro' the *infinite* host, nor less for that. 874.

O argument *blasphemous*, false, and proud ! 809.

Refrain'd his tongue *blasphemous*, but anon.
vi. 360.

Which of us, who beholds the bright *surface*.
472.

Of thrones and mighty seraphim *prostrate*.] 841.

Male he created thee, but thy *consort*. vii. 529.

Of glory *attributed* to the high.

viii. 12, 107. ix. 320. xi. 836.

Only to shine, yet scarce to *contribute*. viii. 155.

Not to incur ; but soon his clear *aspect*. 336.

Forth rush the *lévant* *, and the ponent winds.

x. 704.

Like change on sea and land, *fidéral* blast. 693.

Beyond all past example, and *futūre*. 840.

In reading the foregoing lines it is necessary to comply with Milton's accentuation ; otherwise the measure of the verse will be destroyed. Let him be answerable for the singularities of the pronunciation. Many of the syllables, on which he places the accent, are long syllables in Latin, from which the words are derived : as, triūphus, ōbscœnus, ōbscurus, volūbilis, odōrus, infinītus, blasphemus, Gr. βλασφημος, prostrātus, consōrs, attribūtus, contribūtus, aspēctus, futūrus, &c. This may be some apology for the poet.

* The word *levant* is here used as an adjective ; and Milton's position of the accent is supposed to be proper, in order to distinguish it from the substantive. Vid. Nares's Orth. p. 198. When united to a substantive it is however generally pronounced with the accent on the latter syllable : as the *levánt-trade*.

§ XIV.

IN many other places Milton adopts an irregular accentuation, which the reader cannot follow with any tolerable propriety, or for any etymological reason.

EXAMPLES.

To do ought good *never* will be our task.

P. L. i. 159.

Moors by his side *under* the lee, while night.

207. 345. x. 190.

Abject and lost lay these, *cow'ring* the flood.

312.

Gods, yet confess'd *later* than heav'n and earth.

509.

The other two *equall'd* with me in fate. iii. 33.

And flow'rs aloft, *shading* the fount of life. 357.

Second to thee, *offer'd* himself to die.

409.

Present ; thus to his son *audibly* spake.

vii. 518.

Which tasted works *knowledge* of good and evil.

543.

To whom, with healing words, *Adam* reply'd.

P. L. ix. 290.

In the *visions* of God. It was a hill. xi. 377.

Grateful to heav'n; *over* his head behold, 864.

Milton frequently lays the accent on insignificant particles.

EXAMPLES.

Thus Belial, *with* words cloth'd in reason's garb.

P. L. ii. 226.

Thrive under evil, and work ease *out* of pain.

261.

Thy ling'ring, *or* with one stroke *of* this dart.

702.

Shoot far *into* the bosom *of* dim night.

1036.

The full blaze *of* thy beams, and through a cloud.

iii. 378.

Yet fell. Remember, *and* fear *to* transgress.

vi. 912.

And dust shalt eat all *the* days *of* thy life.

x. 178.

In the sweat *of* thy face, shalt thou eat bread.

205.

To whom thus Michael. These are *the* product.

xi. 683.

For

OF THE ENGLISH VERSE. 61

For gods; yet him God *the* most high vouchsafes.

xii. 120.

And, thou moon, *in* the vale of Ajalon. 266.

The following lines are irregular, consisting of eleven or twelve syllables; and destitute of all poetical harmony.

Imbu'd, bring *to* their sweetness no satiety.

viii. 216.

For he who tempts, tho' in vain, at least asperes.

ix. 295.

I also err'd in over-much admiring.

1178.

Him, who to worth in women overtrusting.

1183.

Because thou hast hearken'd to the voice of thy wife.

x. 198.

Notwithstanding Milton's reputation for sublimity of style, and harmony of numbers, we may venture to assert, that these and a multitude of other verses, in the *Paradise Lost*, are mere prose, without either elegance or elevation.

There is perhaps no reason, why we should suppose, that a false position of the accent is more allowable in English poetry, than false quantity in the works of Homer or Virgil.



§ XV.

THERE are some other circumstances, relative to Milton's versification, which may deserve the attention of the young and unexperienced reader. Few of our modern poets have contracted and extended their words in a more arbitrary and capricious manner than he.

CONTRACTIONS.

And chiefly thou, O *spirit*, that dost prefer.

i. 17.

In equal *ruin*. Into what pit thou seest.

91.

Strength undiminish'd, or eternal *being*.

154, 161.

Created *biggest*, that swim the ocean-stream. 202.

Whom *reason* hath equall'd, force hath made supreme.

248.

Thro' God's high suff'rance for the *trial* of man.

366.

Of *riot* ascends above the loftiest tow'rs.

499.

Against the *biggest*, and fierce with grasped arms.

667.

Thrive

OF THE ENGLISH VERSE. 63

Thrive under *evil*, and work ease out of pain.

ii. 261.

As *pillar* of state; deep on his front engrav'n.

302.

Perhaps thy *capital* seat, from whence had spread.

xi. 343.

And fear of God, from whom their *piety* feign'd.

799.

In these lines, all the words printed in Italic characters are contracted into one syllable, except *capital* and *piety*. These are to be considered as disyllables.

Such contractions are, in general, harsh and unmusical.

ELISIONS,

When the next word begins with a vowel:

To set himself in *glory* above his peers. i. 39.

That were an *ignominy*, and shame beneath.

115.

The pleasant *valley* of Hinnom, Tophet thence.

404.

O'er *many* a frozen, *many* a fiery Alp. ii. 620.

This

This line does not consist of twelve syllables, as some have imagined; but of ten, with two elisions. If the word *many* before a vowel is not to be considered as a monosyllable, a great number of lines, in Milton and other poets, would contain eleven syllables; for instance:

In heav'n by *many* a tow' red structure high.

i. 733.

Besides, if *many* is made a dissyllable in this line, the measure will be entirely destroyed.

OTHER ELISIONS.

He *also* against the house of God was bold.

i. 470.

Shoots invisible *virtue* ev'n to the deep.

iii. 586.

No ingrateful food, and food alike those pure.

v. 207.

God made *thee* of choice his own, and of his own.

x. 766.

In some of the later editions of *Paradise Lost* the foregoing contractions and elisions are generally marked by an apostrophe, thus: spi'rit, glory', many', &c.

The

OF THE ENGLISH VERSE. 65

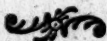
The termination *ed*, in verbs and participles frequently forms a syllable, and should be observed in the pronunciation.

EXAMPLES.

With <i>fixed</i> anchor in his scaly rind.	i. 206.
Invests the sea, and <i>wished</i> morn delays.	208.
Of that <i>inflamed</i> sea, he stood and call'd.	300.
Thus drooping, or with <i>linked</i> thunderbolts.	328.
From ev'ry band, and <i>squared</i> regiment.	758.
In this <i>abhorred</i> deep to utter woe.	ii. 87.
With <i>armed</i> watch, that render all access.	130.

The termination *ed*, being a languid and unimportant syllable, has a bad effect in poetry. The same may be observed of some words which are extended, contrary to the usual custom of the best poets; as the word *heaven* in the following line:

Of pow'rs, that erst in *heaven* sat on thrones.
i. 361.



§ XVI.

IN reading, it may frequently be necessary to favour the rhyme, more especially when ancient usage, etymology, or the solemnity of the style, may be supposed to justify a deviation from the common pronunciation.

EXAMPLES.

WIND.

High in the midst upon his urn reclin'd,
His sea-green mantle waving with the *wind*.

Pope, Wind. F. 347.

The time shall come, when free as air or *wind*,
Unbounded Thames shall flow for all mankind.

Ib. 395. Eff. on Crit. 207.

Wind, in familiar pronunciation, rhimes to *finn'd*; but in *mind*, *bind*, *blind*, and every other word in English, terminating in *ind*, the *i* is pronounced as a long vowel.

DRAUGHT.

The daily anodyne, the nightly *draught*,
To kill those foes to fair ones, time and thought.

Mor. Eff. ii. 111.

The

The luscious wine th' obedient herald brought,
Around the mansion flow'd the purple *draught*.
Odyf. xiii. 68.

Draught, in common conversation, is pronounced as a rhyme to *raft*, *craft*.

FAULT.

Before his sacred name flies ev'ry *fault*;
And each exalted stanza teems with thought.
Eff. on Crit. 422. 1691.
Mor. Eff. ii. 73.

Eumæus at the sylvan lodge he fought,
A faithful servant, and without a *fault*.
Odyf. xiv. 5.

The *l* is now very generally pronounced in *fault*; and there is no reason why it should be omitted. It is universally pronounced in *malt*, *salt*, *assault*, &c.

SHEW.

Of ev'ry star, the sky doth *shew*,
And ev'ry herb, that sips the dew.
Milt.

SATELLITES.

Or ask of yonder argent fields above,
Why Jove's *satellites* are less than Jove.
Eff. on Man. i. 41.

Satellites,

Satellites, the plural of *satelles*, is a Latin word of four syllables, and must be pronounced as such, in the foregoing verse. *Satellite*, in the plural *satellites*, considered as an English word, is only a trisyllable.

CAPRICE.

That counterworks each folly and *caprice*,
And disappoints th' effect of ev'ry vice.

Ib. ii. 239. Ess. on Crit. 285.

Dr. Young lays the accent on the first syllable.

For *caprice* is the daughter of success.

Sat. vii.

Swift, more agreeably to the common pronunciation, says:

How have you torn my heart in pieces,
With maggots, humours, and *caprices*!

Love-poem.

TEA.

Can vent her thunders; and her lightnings play,
O'er cooling gruel, and composing *tea*.

Young, Sat. v.

Here thou, great Anna, whom three realms obey,
Dost sometimes counsel take—and sometimes *tea*.

Rape of the L. iii. 72.

Soft, yielding minds in water glide away,
And sip, with nymphs, their elemental *tea*.

Ib. i. 61.

By

By these and other passages it appears very probable, that formerly the word *tea* was generally pronounced as a rhyme to *day*, *play*, *stay*, &c. However, in the last line of the Eclogue, called the Basset-table, the author gives it the modern pronounciation.

The snuff-box to Cardelia I decree;
Now leave complaining, and begin your *tea*.

In his Essay on Man, he lays the accent on the latter syllable in

BARRIER.

'Twixt that and reason, what a nice *barrier*,
For ever sep'rate, yet for ever near!

Ess. i. 223.

In the Odyſſey it is placed on the first syllable, as it is now generally pronounced.

Safe in the love of heav'n an ocean flows,
Around our realm, a *barrier* from the foes.

Odyſ. vi. 243.

Mr. Pope lays the accent improperly on the first syllable of *mathesis*.

MATHESIS.

Mad *matheſis* alone was unconfin'd.

Dunc. iv. 31.

In

In the following couplet the real quantity is preserved :

Or from *mathefs*' lines their minds produce
Frames of mechanic skill and various use.

Pye, P. Laur.

BIGOTTED.

Bigotted to this idol we disclaim
Rest, health, and ease, for nothing but a name.

Dispenf. c. iii.

In the more usual, and the more agreeable, pronounciation, the first word in this couplet is accented on the first syllable, and is more properly written with one *i*, *bigoted*.

MAGAZINES.

Thus a weak state, by wise distrust inclines
To numerous stores, and strength in *magazines*.

Ib. c. iv. Dunc. i. 42.

Magazines is now universally pronounced, as if written *magazeens*.

GALLANTS.

Faith, *gallants*, board with faints, and bed with finners.

Pope, Ep. to J. Shore, v. 24.

Gallants, when it signifies *lovers*, is now constantly accented on the second syllable.

RECORD.

OF THE ENGLISH VERSE. 71

RECORD.

Shall stand for ages on *record*.

Swift, Market-hill Thorn.

The accent is more properly placed on the first syllable:

It stands on *rècord*, that in Richard's times.

Pope, Imit. Sat. i. 145.

EFFORTS.

Here, at our gates, your brave *efforts* unite.

Il. vi. 99.

ASSASSIN.

Nor thou, Lord Arthur, shalt escape,

To thee I often call'd in vain,

Against that *assassin* in crape.

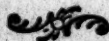
Swift, Market-hill Thorn.

In this passage, Swift has laid the accent on the first syllable of the word *assassin*. It is now, I believe, universally laid on the second. This word is supposed to have been originally brought from Asia. Abbé Vertot thinks, that it took its rise from the poniard used in private murders, called, in the Persian language, *hassifin*.

Mr. Pope lays the accent on the second syllable, in conformity to the usual pronunciation.

But dreadful too, the dark *assassin* hires.

Mor. Ess. iii. 28.



POETIC LICENCES.

§ XVII.

1. SOME words are abbreviated by the omission of one or more letters: as, *'tis* for *it is*, *th'* for *the*, *tho'* for *though*, *I'll* for *I will*, *e'en* for *even*.

Can't, won't, shan't, don't, mayn't, an't, 'em, let's, to't, by't, &c. are absolute barbarisms, and should never be admitted either into poetry or prose.

2. The poets generally omit the letter *s*, denoting the possessive case, after proper names ending in *s* or *x*: as,

Achilles' wrath. Il. i. 1.

Alcides' power. Ib. v. 485.

Thetis' arms. Ib. vi. 168.

Tydeus' son. Ib. 180.

Argos' sceptre. Ib. 197.

Ajax' board. Ib. xv. 302.

Phoenix' daughter. Ib. xiv. 367.

This

This abbreviation is not only unnecessary, but unjustifiable in prose; because as we have happily two methods of expressing the same idea, we can either say, Achilles's wrath, or the wrath of Achilles.

3. The pronoun *whose*, which is usually appropriated to persons, is generally applied by the poets to inanimate objects.

EXAMPLES.

— A country, from *whose* bourne
No traveller returns. Haml. act. iii. 2.

The question, *whose* solution I require.
Dryd.

Eternity, *whose* end no eye can reach.
P. L. xii. 556.

A road, *whose* dust is gold. Ib. vii. 577.

In caves, *whose* entrance leads to hell.
Odyf. ix. 130.

Be his this sword, *whose* blade of brass displays
A ruddy gleam; *whose* hilt, a silver blaze.
Ib. viii. 437.

Bishop Lowth accounts for this use of the word, by observing, that "the higher poetry loves to consider every thing, as bearing a personal

sonal character." But this remark is not applicable in the present instance. There can be no shadow of a personal character, or any personification, in the foregoing passages *. *Whose* is used by a poetic licence, instead of—*of which*; merely because the latter expression is prosaic, and cannot easily be admitted into elevated poetry.

4. Adjectives are frequently used instead of adverbs.

EXAMPLES.

Fierce as he mov'd †, his silver shafts resound.

Il. i. 64.

Slow † from his seat arose the Pylion sage.

Ib. 330.

Sedate and *silent* move the num'rous bands.

Ib. iv. 486.

* See Personification in the Appendix.

† The variation of the tenses, in the words *mov'd* and *resound*, is a poetic licence, or rather, a grammatical impropriety.

‡ In this line Mr. Pope has not preserved the idea, which Homer gives us of Nestor. When that old experienced warrior foresaw the fatal effects of the contention between Agamemnon and Achilles, he forgot his infirmities, and *rose up in haste* to pacify them, *αγορεύει*.

Il. i. 248.

Silent

Silent the warrior smil'd, and pleas'd resign'd.
Il. vi. 504.

Swift down the steep of heav'n the chariot rolls.
Il. v. 958.

Smooth glides the chariot thro' the liquid sky.
Ib. viii. 477.

5. Adverbs are sometimes compared by *er* and *est*, instead of the adverbs more and most.

Sceptre and pow'r—I *gladlier* shall resign.
P. L. vi. 730.

Plainlier shall be reveal'd. Ib. xii. 151.

This is to be considered as a grammatical impropriety, rather than a poetic licence: so is the word *either*, which frequently occurs, instead of *each*.

Here in the midst, in *either* army's fight.
Il. iii. 127.

And next the troops of *either* Ajax views.
Il. iv. 311.

Fast by our side, let *either* faithful swain
In arms attend us, and *their* part sustain.
Odyf. xxii. 120.

These are the words of Ulysses; and the two swains, whose assistance he required, were Eumæus and Philætius. *Either* is used for *each*, and *their*, improperly,

improperly, instead of *his*. The pronominal adjective *each* signifies *both* of them, taken separately; *either* means only *the one*, or *the other*; which is contrary to the sense of the original.

A previous knowledge of Accentuation, or the measure of an English verse, will enable the young reader to pronounce the ancient Greek and Roman names of gods, goddesses, heroes, countries, cities, &c. in a proper manner.

EXAMPLES.

A.

A chief stood nigh, who from *Abydas* came.

Iliad, iv. 573.

Was in the straits of *Abyla* confin'd.

Tasso, xv. 232.

Like *Styx* and *Acheron* in realms below.

Id. xiii.

Of *Peleus*, *Æacus*, and *Jove*, am I.

Il. xxi.

Thy distant wife, *Ægiale* the fair.

Il. v.

The tyrant *Æolus* from his airy throne.

Dryd. Æn. i.

Agricola

Agricola * with prudence rul'd the land.
Then from his glitt'ring throne *Alcinous* rose.
Odyf. viii.

From his proud pyramid *Amasis* † torn.
Lucan ix.

Inquire of *Amathus*, whose wealthy ground.
Ov. Met. x.

Deplor'd *Amphimachus*, sad object, lies.
Il. xiii.

When to his harp divine *Amphion* sung.
Pope, Statius.

Of *Amphitritè* and her tending nymphs.
Thom. Sum.

But fierce *Andronicus* would not relent.
Shak. And. ii. 5.

These *Andronicus* † and Eubulus bring.
Mild

* A Roman governor in Britain, from the year 78. to 84. About this time many of the Britons began to wear the dress, imitate the manners, learn the arts, and speak the language of the Romans.

† Non mihi pyramidum tumulis evulsus *Amasis*.
Luc. ix. 155.

‡ The first syllable in *vixi*, *victoria*, from which the latter part of the word *Andronicus* is derived, is a long syllable—*βουλετο vixi*. Il. vii. 21. For this reason, *Andronicus*, *Cleonicus*, *Stratonicus*, *Polynices*, *Thefalonica*, &c. have the penultima always long. Shakespeare, supposing him to have been the author of the tragedy of *Andronicus*, is not to be vindicated

Mild *Anticlea* your regard poffest.

Titler's Callim. iii.

Unmindful of her fon, *Anticlea* * ftands.

Odyf. xi.

There mov'd *Antiope* with haughty charms.

Odyf. xi.

Whofe crown *Antiphales*, the tyrant, wore.

Ov. xiv.

And ev'n th' *Antipodes* *Vigilius* mourn †.

Pope, Dunc. iii.

And

in placing the accent on the fecond ſyllable of this word. His mode of pronounciation is indeed of no weight in ſuch caſes. He appears to have been but ſlightly acquainted with the proſody of the ancients. The Greek and Roman poets preferred a remarkable uniformity in the quantity of their ſyllables; and an Engliſh reader of taſte ſhould certainly be guided by their authority. In proper names, all deviations from the invariable uſage of Homer, Virgil, Horace, &c. ſhould be exploded as errors, or conſidered as poetic licences. Tully, Ovid, Proſerpine, Diomed, Thebes, Athens, and other abbreviations have gained a fort of ſanction by immemorial cuſtom, and muſt be tolerated.

* *ANTICLEA*. Odyf. xi. 85. The penultima is a long ſyllable.

† *Vigilius*, or rather *Virgilius*, or *Vergilius*, was a native of Ireland, and became biſhop of Saltzburg in 767. He is ſaid to have had a controverſy with Boniface, archbiſhop of Mentz, about the *Antipodes*: "In quâ cauſâ, ſays Sir James Ware, *Virgilius noſter immerito ſuecubuit.*" De Script. Hib. p. 37.

Gefner

And *Aphrodite*, from the foam, her name.

Hes. Theog.

Sinks on *Apidanus*' green banks to rest.

Prop. i. 3.

Aratus, who a while relum'd the soul.

Thom. Wint.

The pride of Persia at *Arbela* fell.

Great *Archimedes*, with superior skill.

Archytas, what avails thy nice survey?

Hor. od. i. 28.

In *Areopagus* * the senate met.

And challenge fam'd *Arion* on the floods.

Dryd. Virg. E. vii.

Gesner tells us, that about the year 780, Boniface accused him before pope Zachary; and that he was *remotus*, removed, I suppose, from his bishoprick. — Gesn. Isag. § 421. 618.

Virgilius died in 784, or 785.

Though the preceding story is related by Aventin, Ware, Gesner, and other writers, some of whom assert, that Virgilius was "consigned to the flames" [See Curioſities of Literature, p. 25. where he is erroneously called bishop of *Salisbury*] yet there is reason to suspect, that it is much exaggerated, or a groundless tradition. Vid. Mem. de Trev. an. 1708.

* The first syllable in *παρας*, a bill, is uniformly short. See Odyſ. v. 405. Ovid calls the *Areopagus*, *scopulus mæortis*, Met. vi. 70.

Like Cato firm, like *Aristides* just.

Thom. Sum.

Aristodemus just applause receiv'd.

With patriot zeal *Aristogiton* glow'd.

Ye sons of *Arſaces* *, ye foes of Rome.

Lucan. 1.

And *Asphaltites*, for bitumen fam'd.

The young *Aſſyanax*, the hope of Troy.

Il. vi.

Now *Atbamas* cries out, his reason fled.

Ov. iv.

B.

Which when *Beëlzebub* † perceiv'd, than whom.

P. L. ii.

The *Belides* ‡ their leaky vessels fill.

Ov. iv.

Whose hard commands *Beleroſſon* obey'd.

Il. vi.

* *Arſacidæ*, bellum, &c. Luc. i. 108. viii. 409.

† This pronunciation is more agreeable to the Greek, than the Hebrew, כַּעֲלִיזָבָב. — Βεελζεβουλ for Βεελζεβουβ. Luke xi. 15.—The former conſiſts of only three ſyllables; the latter of four.

‡ *Aſſidue* repetunt, quas perdant, *Belides* undas.

Ov. M. iv. 463.

Sleep'ſt

Sleep't by the fable of *Bellerus* * old.

Milt. Lycid.

Next, with her bloody scourge *Bellona* flies.

Pitt, Virg. viii.

Here vex'd by winter storms *Benacus* raves.

Add. Trav. p. 42. Virg. G. ii.

The lovely *Benenice* was thy care.

Theoc. xvii.

That see *Boötes* urge his tardy wain.

Thom. Wint.

Whom gods *Briareas*, men *Ægeon*, name.

Il. i.

And *Briarëus* †, with all his hundred hands.

Dryd. Virg. vi.

Briseis, radiant as the queen of love.

Il. xix.

Was it for this *Busiris* was subdu'd ?

Ov. ix.

* Bellerophon, whose real name was Hipponous, or Hipponomus, was called Bellerophon, in consequence of having slain one Bellerus, a Corinthian prince. The second syllable of Bellerus, like the second in Bellerophon, is short. Milton has taken an unauthorized liberty in making it long. Vid. Heyne, not. ad Apollod. ii. 3.

† Et centum geminus Briarëus, & bellua Lernæ.

Virg. vi. 287.

C.

To *Cæsarea* thence he took his way.

Begin, *Calliope*, begin the song.

He soars a new *Callimachus* in song.

From *Arachosia*, from *Candaor* east.

Milt. P. R. ii.

When on *Caphareus*' rocks *Oileus* fell.

Pitt, Virg. ii.

Cafus the strong, and *Carpathus* * the fair.

Il. ii. 824.

And *Caucasus*, and proud *Olympus* shine.

Ov. ii.

Cajster, fam'd for sweetly-singing swans †.

Ov. v. 386.

First

* Homer calls this island *Crapathus*; probably because it suited the measure of his verse. Vid. Cellar. Geog. vol. ii. p. 27.

† Many of the Greek and Latin writers, particularly the poets, [see Callim. Hym. in Del. 249. Virg. Ecl. ix. 29. Ov. Met. v. 386. xiv. 430. Epist. Hozoid. vii. Mart. xiii. 77.] have attributed a musical voice to swans; and, in conformity to this notion, have found an affinity between a swan and a poet. Horace calls Pindar, "the Theban swan;" and describes an imaginary

First dire *Chimæra*'s conquest was enjoin'd.

Il. vi.

Like rigid *Cinnamomum*, nobly poor.

Thom. Sum.

Stopp'd in the tumult *Cleobulus* lies. Il. xvi.

Cleombrotus, and many more too long.

P. L. iii.

And slew *Cleomenes*, the Spartan king.

Ah! why, ye gods, must *Cleomenes* * wait?

Dryd. Cleom. act. i.

imaginary transformation of himself into this majestic and harmonious bird. Several modern authors, as Olaus Wormius, Th. Bartholinus, Aldrovandus, &c. have endeavoured to defend the story of their singing. Even the learned Heyne speaks of it in these favourable terms: "Cygnorum cantum, saltem filvestrium, nostrâ quoque ætate, rerum experimento vindicârunt plures viri docti; in his Abb. Mongez." Annot. in Virg. Ecl. ix. 29. Ælian says very properly, "It is commonly reported, that a swan sings most harmoniously, especially before death; but neither I myself, nor perhaps any other man, ever heard a swan sing." Var. Hist. i. 14. I am entirely of Ælian's opinion; and cannot but consider the report as a poetical fiction, or a vulgar error. Plin. x. 23. Lucian. de Eridani cygnis.

* The penultima of *Cleomenes* is a short syllable. The author has no authority for the liberty he takes in making it a long one. One would imagine, that Dryden, Shakespeare, and some other writers, had imitated the French, and adopted this convenient maxim:

Nos Galli non curâmus quantitatem.

The French is *Cleomene*.

There *Chymene* and *Mara* I behold. Odyf. xi.

Thro' which *Cocyus* rolls his lazy streams.
Addis. Petron.

Does *Samos*, *Colophon*, or *Smyrna* yield?
Hor.

Behind, my lov'd *Creüsa* took her way.
Pitt, Virg. ii.

Hence *Cybele*, the mother of the gods.
Trapp, Virg. iii.

Thence thro' the *Cyclades* the navy glides.
Pitt, Virg. iii.

Mine is *Cythera*, mine the Cyprian tow'rs.
Dryd. Virg. x.

The loves of *Mars* and *Cytherea* fings.
Odyf. viii.

What joy to see *Cytorus* wave with box!
Wart. Virg. G. ii.

D.

A structure rais'd by *Dædalus*, 'tis said.
Pitt, Virg. ii.

Fair *Damiata* next the eye surveys.
Tass. xv.

In fluid gold to *Danae's* heart he came.
Ov. vi.

Which *Danaus* us'd in sacred rites of old.
Pope, Statius.

And

OF THE ENGLISH VERSE. 8

And ancient *Dardanus*, deriv'd from Jove.

Pitt, Virg. iii.

Perhaps you've heard of *Deianira's* charms.

Ov. ix.

I deem'd *Deiphobus* had heard my call.

Il. xxii.

Because *Democritus* in rapture cries.

Hor.

Where great *Demosthenes* was us'd to wield.

Addis. Petron.

Nor *Dindymene*, nor her priests possess.

Hor.

Fierce *Diomedes* * wounds the Cyprian queen.

Nor less *Dione* might for Thebes contend.

Pope, Stat.

Where cold *Dodona* lifts her holy trees.

Il. ii. 909.

The fatal port of *Drepanum* appears.

Pitt, Virg. iii.

Pales and Pan, the *Dryades* and swains.

Virg. Ecl. v.

E

And *Eleäle* to the Asphalic pool.

P. L. i.

* Gr. Διομήδης;—Diomedis ad urbem.

Virg. viii. 9.

Then

Then will I tell *Empedocles's* story. Hör.

And huge *Enceladus* was hurl'd to hell.
Hom. Bat.

His regal pow'r the *Ephōri* restrain'd:

Or comes from *Ephyre* *, with poisons fraught.
Odys. ii.

And in *Epirus* bid the senate meet. Luc. v.

Now, *Erato*, thy poet's mind inspire.
Dryd. Virg. vii.

The swift *Eridanus* delights to glide.
Hom. Bat.

Here *Eriphyle* weeps, who loosely fold.
Odys. xi.

Decrees to proud *Eteocles* the crown.
Pope, Stat.

The graceful *Eucharis* with matchless art.

While mighty Cæsar to *Euphrates* bears:
Warton, Virg. G.

Euripus ebbing to his course again. Stat. vii.

* Mr. Pope, by a poetic licence, makes the second in *Ephyre* a long syllable:

Then call'd *Ephyre*, &c. ll. vi. 193.

OF THE ENGLISH VERSE. 87

And royal *Eurytus* oppress'd with woe.

Callim. epig. vi.

Eurotus now he loves, and Sparta's plain.

Ov. x.

Restore, restore *Eurydice* to life.

Pope.

Alone the bold *Eurymachus* reply'd.

Odyf. xxii.

G.

The fertile *Gades*, and each neighb'ring coast.

Tass. xv.

Galesus, thy sweet stream I'll choose.

Hor.

For ravish'd *Ganymede* on Tros bestow'd.

H. v.

Where high along the coast *Garganus* lies.

Luc. v.

And *Gargarus* admires his unexpected heaps.

Pitt, Virg. G.

And triple *Geryon's* * monstrous size.

Hor.

Arriv'd

* Many of our English poets take the liberty to lay the accent on the second syllable in *Geryon*. This is contrary to the usage of the ancients: *e. g.*

Geryone extincto, &c. Virg. vii. 662. viii. 202. Hor. od. ii. 4. Sil. Ital. iii. 422. Some writers produce the authority of Claudian

Arriv'd in triumph from *Geryon* slain.

Dryd. Virg. vii.

Whom the fair daughter of *Granicus* bore.

Ov. xi.

Æsepus, *Granicus* *, with mingl'd force.

Il. xii.

Guiana, whose great city *Geryon*'s sons.

P. L. xi.

H.

Do *Halkyons*, lov'd by *Thetis*, stretch their wings?

Trapp. Virg. G. 1.

Pours in among the stormy *Hebrides*.

Thom. Aut.

Why, how now, *Hecat*, you look angrily.

Shakesp. Macb. iii. 6.

Claudian for lengthening the second syllable. See Grad. ad Parnaf. Smetii Profod.

Hoc neque *Geryon* triplex, nec turbidus orci.

Claud. in Ruf. i. 294.

But this reading is erroneous. The proper word is *Geryones*, by which the true quantity of the syllables is preserved.

* The second syllable of *Granicus*, in Homer, Hesiod, Ovid, &c. is always a long syllable. Il. xii. 21. Hes. Theog. 342. *Granico nata bicorni*. Ov. Met. xi. 763.

And

OF THE ENGLISH VERSE. 89

And threefold *Hecat* *, with her hundred names.

Dryd. Virg. iv.

On hideous *Hecate*, from hell's abodes.

Pitt, Virg. iv.

And *Hecatompylos*, her hundred gates.

P. Reg. iii.

And Leda's daughter, *Helena* † the fair.

Here Trojan *Helenus* the sceptre sway'd.

Ov. xiii.

'Twou'd burst ev'n *Heracitus* ‡ with the spleen.

Pope.

* Shakespeare, Dryden, Tate in his translation of Ovid. Met. vii. and others, make *Hecate* a dissyllable. But the later poets, with much greater propriety, make it a word of three syllables. The former can only be reckoned a vulgarism; unless perhaps the abbreviation may be thought allowable, when used as a nick-name for a *modern* witch.

† In the Greek and Latin poets the penultima of *Helena*, Gr. Ἑλενη, is invariably a short syllable. But it is *vulgarly* pronounced as a long one in St. Helena, the name of a well-known island in the Atlantic ocean; so called by the Portuguese, because, in the year 1502, they discovered it on the 18th of August, the day dedicated, by the Romish church, to St. Helena, the mother of Constantine the Great. Heyl. Cosmog. p. 993. Paschoud's Geog. p. 316.

‡ *Heracitus* ne'er would deny

To tittle, and cherish his heart.

This is irregular: the *i* is a long vowel.

Heracitus init, &c. Lucr. i. 639.

Hermioné,

Hermioné, the fairest of her kind.

Ov. iv.

In pleasing style *Herodotus* display'd.

Hesione was bound the monster's prey.

Luc. ix.

And *Hesperus*, that led the starry host.

P. L.

Where *Himera's* meand'ring waters flow.

Theoc. vii.

What once befel *Hippolytus* of old.

Ov. xiii.

Hippomenes provok'd by noble strife.

Theoc. iiii.

Far to the blue horizon's utmost verge.

Thom. Sum.

The stormy *Hyades*, the rainy goat.

Ov. iii.

The streams of *Hypanis* are sweet no more.

Ov. xiii.

When *Hyperion** from his noon-tide throne.

Akenside.

Then

* Shakespeare and some other English poets pronounce *Hyperion* with *i* short: *e. g.*

Hyperion to a satyr.—

Ham. i. 3.

This

OF THE ENGLISH VERSE. 97

Then *Hyperion's* son, pure fount of day *.

West. Pind. vii.

Her widow'd bed *Hypphyle* bewail'd.

Prop. i. 15.

Antigonus and old *Hyrceanus* bound. P. R.

I.

Cæus, *Iâpetus*, *Typhœus* dire.

Trapp. Virg. G. 1.

From Crete, *Idomenæus*, an exile, fled.

Pitt, Virg. xi.

Nor old *Ilionæus* his tears restrain.

Dryd. Virg. 9.

As when a vulture on *Imaus* † bred. P. L.

Old *Inachus* reclining on his urn. Stat.

This is contrary to the invariable custom of the Greek and Roman poets. See Il. xix. 398. Hes. Theog. 134. Ov. Fast. v. 159.

Jamque duas lucis partes Hyperione menso.

Ov. Met. viii. 564.

† The penultima of *Imaus* is generally considered as a short syllable; but as this mountain is called by some Greek writers *Ιμαίος*, as well as *Ιμαος*, several modern poets have made it a long one, *e. g.*

Caucasia, et superis jamjam calcandus Imäus.

Jov. Pontan. Urania, l. v.

Thom. Autumn, 781.

This

This *Iöle* by Hercules' command. Ov. ix.

His *Iphigenia* *, his daughter, bleeds.
Power, Juv. xii.

Nor *Rodope* nor *Ismarus*, that heard.
Pitt, Virg. Ecl. vi.

In flames *Ismenus* and the *Phafis* roll'd.
Ov. ii.

And young *Iülus* shares his father's fate.
Pitt, Virg. i.

Stretch'd on the rolling wheel *Ixion* lies.
Ov. iv.

L.

Whom *Lacedamon's* lofty hills inclose.
Il. ii.

Then straight to *Lachesis* he gave command.
West. Pind.

Proclaims *Laöcoon*, justly doom'd to die.
Dryd. Virg. ii.

Laodamia † walks; and *Coeneus* once.
Trapp, Virg. vi.

* In the Greek and Latin poets, the penultima of *Iphigenia* is always a long syllable. The translator of Juvenal's twelfth satire has adopted the true pronunciation, and made the name consist of five syllables. Dryden and others have contracted it into four. Dryd. Ov. xii.

† Though Homer and Virgil make the penultima of *Laodamia* a long syllable, yet many of our English poets lay the accent on the antepenultima.

Laomedon's

Laomedon's white flocks *Bucolion* fed. Il. vi.

At length *Leucate's* cloudy top appears.
Dryd. Virg. iñ.

Leuesthoe is grown thy only care. Ov. iv.

And *Libanus* with stately cedars crown'd.

The fam'd *Longimanus* the sceptre sway'd.

Thee, bold *Longinus*, all the nine inspire.
Pope.

Thence call'd *Lotophagi*, which who so tastes.
Odyf. ix.

When *Ludovicus* * saw his troops retire.

Altho' the grim *Lycaon* was her sire. Ov. ii.

To nature's vast *Lyceum*, forth they walk.
Thom. Sum.

With *Lycomedes* of Creiontian strain. Il. xix.

* Elector Rhēni, dux Ludovicus obiit.

Frehezi Theat. p. 754.

Consilijis visi sunt, Ludovice, tuis.

Nicols de Literis inventis, p. 236.

William Nicols, A. M. the author of this work, which was published in 1711, was rector of Stockport in Cheshire. His book is full of classical learning, and curious information.

And

M.

And great *Machaon* wounded in his tent.

Il. xi.

And gratify the *Manes* of the slain.

Il. viii.

Let the *Massagetae* the vengeance feel.

Hor. Od. i. 35.

And from *Mausolus**, *Mausoleum* call'd.

Medea haste, from danger set him free

Ov. vii.

To *Megara* the warrior next repairs.

Stat. i.

O'er *Menalus* I took my steepy way.

Ov. i.

With raging grief great *Menelaus* burns.

Il. xiii.

Swift at the word bold *Merion* snatch'd a spear.

Il. xiii.

Thy gift *Meriones* † his temples crown'd.

Il. x.

* *Mausolus*, Gr. *Μαυσωλος*; *Mausoleum*, *Μαυσωλειον*.

Mausoli faxis, &c. Mart. x. 63.

Nec Mausolei dives fortuna sepulchri.

Propert. iii. 2.

† The second syllable in *Meriones* is properly short.

Meriones poteret, &c.

Ov. xv. 359.

A slave

A slave to *Metopbis*, he mourn'd his fate.

With hasty steps to *Madena* * he went.

Ozell's *Sechia Rapita*.

To him his freedom *Mutina* shall owe.

Ov. xv.

There fam'd *Mycenæ's* lofty tow'rs ascend.

Stat. i.

Low *Mycone*, *Cymolus'* chalky foil.

Ov. vii.

N.

The nimble *Naiades*, who bound.

And first *Nausocrates* the silence broke,

Thence call'd *Neapolis*, but *Naples* now.

Where mount *Nebrodes* †, lifts its tow'ring head.

The fiercest child of *Nemesis* divine.

Thom. Sum.

What more should *Neoptolemus* the brave.

Il. xix.

* The ancient *Mutina*

† *Nebrodes gemini*, &c. Sil. Ital. xiv.

And

And next by rocky *Neritos* * we steer.

Dryd. Virg. iii.

Where high *Neritos* shakes his waving woods.

Il. ii.

To *Nicomedes* he resign'd his pow'r.

The royal *Niobe* in state appear'd.

Ov. vi.

Nor stay'd, till on *Niphates*' top he lights

P. L. iii.

Nyctimene, the owl, enjoys my place.

Ov. ii.

O.

For once beneath *Oebalia*'s lofty tow'rs.

Pitt, Virg. G. iv.

The games ordain'd dead *Oedipus* to grace.

Il. xxiii.

Here fam'd *Oenone* play'd; here stood the cave.

Luc. ix.

Furious o'er *Oete*'s lofty hills he sprung.

Ov. ix.

The flood of *Ogyges* *, renown'd in Greece.

Meges for strength, *Oileus* fam'd for speed.

Il. x.

* *Neritos*, with *i* short, is the true pronunciation. Il. ii. 632.
Virg. iii. 271.

† *Ædonis Ogygio*, &c. Luc. i. 670.

Sold to barbarian *Omphale* * he serv'd.

Soph. Trach.

That fires the length of *Ophiucus* huge.

P. L. ii.

In Scotland at the *Orcades*, and there.

Pope.

Great in *Orchomenos*, in *Pylos* great.

Odyf. xi.

And great *Orion's* more refulgent beam.

Il. xviii.

Or great *Osiris*, who first taught the swain.

Pope, Stat. i.

P.

Pachynos to the stormy south is plac'd.

Ov. xiii.

O'er golden sands let rich *Pactolus* flow.

Pope.

There rude *Palamon*, o'er the watry plain.

Pitt, Virg. v.

Of *Palamedes*, not unknown to fame.

Dryd. Virg. ii.

* *Omphale* in tantum formæ processit honorem.

Prop. iii. 11.

In this verse, the *e* in *Omphale* is made short before a vowel, according to a common rule in Greek poetry. This line has been very improperly cited, as a proof, that the penultima of *Omphale* is a long syllable.

The noble blood of great *Pandion's* race.

Ov. vi.

Then me *Parthenope's* calm pleasures blest.

Wart. Virg. G.

The fam'd *Pantheon* * still remains at Rome.

I view *Pendragon* burst the veiling shade.

West.

The man, who calls *Penelope* his friend.

Odyf. xvii.

The great *Persephone*, the queen of hell.

Pint, Virg. vi.

The breathless *Phaëton* with flaming hair.

Ov. ii.

* Pantheon; Gr. *πανθεον*, so called, as some suppose, from its being a receptacle for the statues of *all the gods*, *παντων των θεων*. As this does not appear to have been the original intention of Agrippa, the son-in-law of Augustus, by whom it was founded, see Plin. xxxvi. 15. the derivation of the word, given by Dio Cassius, is most probably the true one, who calls it, *πανθεον* [quasi totum divinum] "because its magnificent dome resembled the vault of heaven." Lib. 53. p. 515. Suidas, and other Greek writers call it *πανθειον*: the second syllable is consequently long.

This celebrated structure was consecrated by pope Boniface IV. an. 607. to the holy virgin and all the saints, under the title of Sta. Maria della Rotonda.

Nor

Nor dire *Pharnaces* * nor the Libyan moor.

Luc. x.

While *Philomela* tunes her feeble strain,

Parnell.

Great *Philoctetes* taught the shaft to fly.

Odyf. viii.

The gallant *Philop~~men~~*, who to arms.

Thom. Wint.

The smooth *Peneus* from his glassy flood.

Akenfide.

Sprung from *Piritheus* of immortal race.

Il. ii.

His faithful guide *Pisistratus* attends.

Odyf. iii.

First, when the pleasing *Pleiades* appear.

Dryd. Virg. G. iv.

Then first *Polydamas* the silence broke.

Il. xii.

Mean time the banish'd *Polynices* roves.

Pope, Stat.

This artful scheme *Polytropus* † contriv'd.

* Though many of our English poets throw the accent on the penultima of *Pharnaces*; yet Lucan and other ancient writers make it a short syllable.

Pharnacis et gelido, &c.

Phars. x. 476. ii. 637.

† Gr. *Πολυτροπος*, versutus. *Odyf. i. i.* This name occurs in *Telemachus*, b. xv.

Thrice blest *Polyxena*, thy woes shall cease.

Merrick, Tryph. 536.

Yet virgin of *Proserpina* from Jove.

P. L. ix.

Now summon'd *Proserpine* to hell's black hall.

Od. ix.

The same, which dead *Protefilaüs* bore.

Il. xv.

For *Pylades* was not more known to fame.

Stat.

And rough *Pylene*, and th' Olenian steep.

Il. ii.

Such as *Pythagoras* could never reach.

Hor.

Q.

With righteous *Remus* shall *Quirinus* reign.

Pitt, Virg. i.

S.

How *Salmagis* with weak, enfeebling streams.

Ov. iv.

In flames the lewd *Sardanapalus* dies.

While unreveng'd the great *Sarpedon* falls.

Il. xvii.

Belus or *Serapis*, their gods, or seat.

P. L. i.

Their

Their god *Serapis* *, and his mystic rites.

But when *Severus* rais'd the lofty wall †.

Two sportive youths *Silenus* sleeping found.

Wart. Virg. E. vi.

And gulphy *Simois* rolling to the main.

Il. xii.

Divine *Sperchius* ‡, Jove-descended flood.

Il. xvi.

* The best Greek and Roman poets make the penultima of *Serapis* a long syllable.

Vincebant, nec quæ turba *Serapin* amat.

Mart. ix. 30.

——— curare *Serapin*. Var. Frag. p. 104.

Catull. 10. 26. Scal. Animad. in Euseb. p. 203.

Martianus Capella, and some others, with an unwarrantable liberty, make the second syllable short.

Te *Serapin Nilus*, &c. lib. ii. Prud. in Sym. ii. 388.

It may be observed, that the first syllable in *Apis*, which is supposed by some [see Gesn. Thes.] to be the same Egyptian deity, is uniformly long.

——— Maçtabitur *Apis*. Luc. ix. 169.

† The Picts wall, built by the emperor Severus, about the year 208, extended from Solway Frith to Newcastle. It is said to have been generally eight feet thick, and four yards high. Some remains of it are still visible. Rapin, H. Eng. b. 1. not.

To lay the accent on the first syllable of *Severus* is insufferably vulgar.

‡ Τῶν τε Σπερχίου, &c. Il. xxiii. 142.

Sperchiusque, et virginibus, &c. Virg. G. ii. 487.

Nor yet is grave *Stefichorus* unheard. Hor.

With joy brave *Stbenelus* receives the prize.
Il. xxiii.

The *Strophades* from thence derive their name.
Pind.

T.

Less fond the god whom *Tanarus* adores.
Prop. i. 13.

Ev'n *Tanaïs*, though fix'd in ice, was lost.
Ov. ii.

Ev'n *Tantalus* his flood unthirsty views.
Ov. x.

Or near *Taprobane* *, in Indian seas.

Thro' all its caves *Taygetus* † resounds.

And all that *Termosiris* had foretold.

Nor did *Terpsichore* adorn her strain.
Pind. ii.

Tbalia, sister of the tuneful quire.

* Aut ubi Taprobanem, &c. Ov. ix. Pont. i. 5. 80.

† Η κατὰ Τεΰγετον, &c. Odyf. vi. 203.

Taygetique canes, &c. Virg. G. iii. 44.

Blind *Thamyris*, and blind *Meonides*.

P. L. iii.

Forbidden *Thebes* appears before his eye.

Pope, Stat.

And *Theodorus*, call'd the gift of God.

Theophanes, the sacred herald, came.

Bred where *Thermodon* laves the Scythian plain.

Tryphid.

As at *Thermopylae* he glorious fell.

Thom. Wint.

Thersites only clamour'd in the throng.

Il. ii.

And *Thrasibulus*, who in ancient days.

Pind. ii.

Thucydides, for history renown'd.

Whilst utmost *Thule* shall thy nod obey.

Wart. Virg. G. i.

Smooth and untroubl'd the *Ticinus* flows.

Sil. Ital. iv.

To rival gay *Timagenes* he tried.

Hor.

And full *Timavus* rolls his nobler stream.

Luc. vii.

Her lash *Tisiphone* that moment shakes.

Pitt, Virg. vi.

Huge

Huge *Tityus* o'er nine acres here is spread.

Ov. iv.

Then *Tomyris* * with indignation fir'd.

The late *Triumviri* † repeal'd the law.

The warlike *Tutones* again rebel.

From *Tyana* the fain'd impostor ‡ came.

Intrepid *Tydeus* thus imparts his grief.

Stat. i.

V.

Venusfrum, famous for its fragrant oil.

And *Veronica* § then became a saint.

Though

* *Nec quæ regna vago Tomyris sinivit Araxe.*

Tibull. iv. 1. 143.

† The third syllable of *decemviri*, *centumviri*, and other similar words, in the Roman history, is likewise short.

‡ *Apollonius Tyaneus*. The Life of *Appollonius* by *Philostratus* is evidently a fiction, written with a view to discredit the miracles and doctrines of *Jesus Christ*.

§ *Veronica* is formed out of two words, *vera icon*, which signify a true image. The Roman catholics tell us, that when our Saviour was going to be crucified, a pious woman lent him a handkerchief to wipe his face. A handkerchief is still preserved

Though some people may think it a matter of very little consequence, to pronounce a number of Greek and Roman names, with the precision of a classical scholar; yet surely it would be *shocking* to hear, I do not say a polite lady, but, a gentleman, who has any pretensions to a liberal education, calling Herodōtus Herodōtus, Thucydīdes Thucydīdes, and Archimēdes Archimēdes; or adopting the pronounciation of a common sailor, who, when he speaks of the ships in the royal navy, talks of the Amphion, the Tisiphōne, and the Terpsichōre; and, in his familiar jargon, converts Æolus into Alehouse, Polyphemus into Poll Famous, and Agamemnon into Eggs and Bacon; or transforms Belle Poule, into Belly Pooly, Bienfaisant into Bonny Pheasant, and L'Oiseau into the Horse-shoe.

It is ridiculous to imagine, that any apology can be made for such absurdities; or that there is any pedantry, or affectation, in speaking with propriety.

served in St. Peter's church at Rome, which, they pretend, still retains the original impresson of our Saviour's countenance. Superstition, credulity, and folly, afterwards converted this *miraculous* picture into a real person; and pope Urban VIII. built an altar to St. Veronica! Middleton's Let. from Rome.—The second syllable of this word is vulgarly pronounced, as a short syllable.

curra

APPENDIX.

I.

PERSONIFICATION.

PERSONIFICATION is a poetical or rhetorical figure, by which inanimate objects are represented as persons.

EXAMPLES.

Wisdom hath length of days in *her* right hand.

Prov. iii. 16.

Nature cries aloud through all *her* works.

Addison.

The deep uttered *his* voice.

Hab. iii. 10.

Joy has *her* tears, and transport has *her* death.

Young.

Th' unwearied sun, from day to day,

Does *his* Creator's pow'r display.

Addison.

When envy reads the nervous lines,

She frets, *she* rails, *she* raves, *she* pines.

Gay.

In these passages, wisdom, nature, the deep, joy, transport, the sun, and envy, are properly personified;

personified; because they are accompanied with personal attributes: as, right-hand, cries, voice, tears, death, unwearied, reads, frets, &c.

When the passage, in which this figure occurs, contains any expression, or circumstance, which is inconsistent with a *personal character*, the use of the pronoun, in the masculine or feminine gender, is improper. Many writers are extremely inaccurate in this particular. The French, as their language has no neuter gender, cannot personify, or make any distinction, in this respect, between the poetic and the vulgar style. And, as they have no pronoun equivalent to our word *it*, they use *il* or *elle*, that is, *he* or *she*; and thus absurdly apply the masculine, or the feminine gender, to a piece of paper, a hair, or a straw. This use of *il* and *elle* has led some injudicious translators of French books into unnecessary, and sometimes absurd, personifications.

In the Old and New Testament there are many passages, in which, though *his* and *her* are applied to inanimate things, a personification, for the reason already assigned, would be absurd: as,

The table and *his* furniture; and the pure candlestick with all *his* furniture. Exod. xxxi. 8.

The brazen altar, and *his* grate of brass. Exod. xxxix. 39.

Look not upon the wine, when it giveth *his* colour in the cup. Prov. xxiii. 31.

If the salt hath lost *his* flavour. Mat. v. 13.

Here the pronoun *his* is used instead of *its*, which does not occur either in the Old or New Testament; but this mode of expression is now obsolete.

II.

ON THE EPIC POEM.

AN epic poem is a poetical narrative of some great action, performed by a hero. It is not a regular detail of facts, like a history; but a story, dignified and embellished by marvellous and heroic events, by the introduction of gods and goddesses, or some other supernatural agents. The poet however should keep within the bounds of probability; otherwise his work becomes a romance. The action should be one; for two actions would divide the reader's attention. The characters should be diversified and contrasted; the plot and the unravelling, natural and easy; the moral, obvious and striking; and the style, equal to the grandeur of the subject. At the beginning, the poet invokes a muse, a celestial personage, who is supposed to give him information, concerning every circumstance, which does not come within the sphere of his knowledge; and he immediately launches out into the middle of the subject. Preceding events are usually related by the hero himself. No god or goddess should be introduced in trifling incidents.

dents. The episodes, that is, the little subordinate stories, should be connected with the principal action.

The most celebrated epic poems are, the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* of Homer—the *Æneid* of Virgil—Milton's *Paradise Lost*, published in 1669—Tasso's *Jerusalem*, written about the year 1505, and translated into English by Mr. Hoole—The *Lusiad* of Camoëns, a Portuguese poet, who wrote about the year 1505, translated into English by Mr. Mickle*—And the *Henriade* of Voltaire, which appeared for the first time, in 1723, under the title of the *LEAGUE*. The London quarto edition, in 1726, altered the title to that, which it has ever since retained, in a multitude of subsequent editions.

* Les Luciades sont les Portugais, nommes Luciades, disent les conteurs de fables, ou de Lusus dix-septieme roi d'Espagne, ou de Lusus fils, ou compaignon de Bacchus, qui conquist les Indos." Baillet, *Ingemens de Savans*, tom. iv. p. 294. "The *Luciad*, in the original *Os Lusiadas*, the *Luciads*, from *Lusitania*, the Latin name of Portugal, derived from *Lusus* or *Lufas*, the companion of Bacchus, in his travels, who is fabulously reported to have planted a colony in that country." Mickle. See *Plin.* iii. c. 1. The subject of the *Lusiad* is the discovery of the East Indies by the Portuguese, under the conduct of Vasco de Gama.



III.

ON THE NATURE OF DRAMATIC POETRY.

THE drama, or dramatic poetry, derives its name from a Greek word, *δρᾶω*, which signifies to *act*; because in this kind of poetry, the action is not *related*, as it is in the epic poem; but *performed* on the stage.

In the drama there are three kinds of unity; the unity of action, the unity of time, and the unity of place *. But these unities are not much regarded.

The language of the drama should be suitable to the persons introduced; their characters should be diversified; the story interesting; the plot artfully contrived; the unravelling easy, the event natural, but striking and unexpected.

* These unities, in the strictest sense imply, that one action should be confined to one place, and one day, or even to the time of representation.

In comedy, vice, folly, and affectation ought to be ridiculed and exposed. In tragedy, the heart should be melted, the tender passions excited, and virtue properly encouraged and rewarded.

IV.

OF THE ANCIENT DRAMATIC AUTHORS.

THE most celebrated *tragic* writers were Æschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides *, among the Greeks, and Seneca among the Romans. These Greek writers lived between four and five hundred years before the Christian æra. The tragedies of these three Greek poets, though simple in their form, have excellences, which have been admired by all succeeding ages. Seneca, the Latin poet, is much inferior to the Greeks.

The Tragedies of Sophocles were translated in 2 vols. 8vo. in 1766, by Dr. Franklin. All the three Greek authors have been since translated by Mr. Potter.

The only *comic* poets among the ancients, whose works are transmitted to us, are Aristo-

* Æschylus, bef. Chr. 493. Sophocles, 469. Euripides, 430. See Sax. edit. 2da, in Epitome.

phanes,

phanes, a Greek writer, 420 years before the birth of Christ; and, among the Romans, Plautus, before Christ 189, and Terence, 164. The best translations, which we have in English of these two Latin poets, are those of Thornton, Colman, and Warner.

V.

OF THE ORIGIN OF MODERN THEATRES.

ALL the theatres of Europe have had their origin in a kind of extempore farces, performed by idle people, strolling about from town to town, and acting in public places to the mob.

In the fifteenth century these buffooneries were succeeded by the exhibition of the *Mysteries*, in which Adam and Eve, the patriarchs, the prophets, the virgin Mary, our Saviour, his apostles, and even God himself, were brought upon the stage, and very often represented in the most ridiculous manner.

In England the *Mysteries* were succeeded by another extravagant species of dramatic entertainment called the *Moralities*, in which the virtues and vices were personified, and introduced on the stage. But the true drama received its birth from the creative genius of Shakespeare, Jonson, and Fletcher. The first was born in 1564, and died in 1616; the second was born in 1574; and the third in 1576, and died in 1625.

The

The French theatre continued very rude and imperfect, till the time of Corneille, Moliere, and Racine. Corneille was born in 1606, Moliere in 1620, and Racine in 1639.

VI.

ON THE SUBJECT AND STYLE OF PASTORAL
POETRY.

PASTORAL poetry is a poetical representation of rural life, or a description of the sports, the contests, the amours, or the adventures of shepherds. In the eclogue, the country must be painted in its most attractive charms, such as it may be supposed to have been in the romantic vales of Arcadia, or the golden age of the poets. The shepherds, who are introduced, must be neither clowns nor courtiers, neither fops nor philosophers. There must be nothing in their discourse, that is rude or vulgar, nothing finical or affected, nothing subtle or abstruse. All must be simple, easy, and natural; the language harmonious and poetical; the images taken from rural life.

The most eminent pastoral writers, among the ancients, were Theocritus and Virgil. The former was a Greek, who flourished about 275 years before Christ; the latter was the celebrated

brated author of the *Æneid*, who lived in the age of Augustus. The chief pastoral writers in English are Spencer, Phillips, Pope, and Gay. The pastorals of Gay are a kind of humorous burlesque on Pastoral poetry.



VII.

ON THE SUBJECT AND STYLE OF ELEGY.

ELEGY is entirely devoted to the emotions of the heart. In its genuine and perfect form, it expresses no other sentiment, breathes no other accents, than those of love and grief. It admits of no pompous expressions, no turns of wit, no florid or fantastic images. The language of sorrow is not designed to excite admiration. It may be tender and pathetic, smooth and mellifluous; but, at the same time, it must be the language of nature and simplicity.

Mr. Gray's Elegy, written in a Country-church-yard, and Mr. Pope's on the Death of an unfortunate Lady, are beautiful productions in this species of poetry.

VIII.

ON THE SUBJECT AND STYLE OF LYRIC
POETRY.

LYRIC poetry derives its name from the lyre, to which it was originally adapted.

This species of poetry was at first employed among the ancients, in celebrating the praises of gods and heroes; but was afterwards extended to subjects of every kind. It was therefore composed in a variety of different measures.

When the poet snatches his lyre, he is supposed to be animated by his subject; his imagination soars, and he springs away with impetuosity.

The ode ought to abound in bold expressions, magnificent images, rapid flights, and all the indications of a poetical enthusiasm.

The most eminent Lyric poets were Alcæus, Sappho, Anacreon, Pindar, among the Greeks; and Horace among the Romans.

Pindar,

Pindar *, the prince of Lyric poets, about 449 years before the Christian æra, celebrated the victors at the Olympic games. Horace flourished in the reign of Augustus, and died eight years before the birth of Christ.

Mr. Dryden's Ode on St. Cecilia's day, and Mr. Pope's on the same subject, are admirable compositions in this species of poetry.

* Bef. Chr. 449. Ibid.

IX.

OF SATIRE.

SATIRE is a species of poetry, calculated to expose the caprices, intrigues, singularities, follies, and vices of mankind.

Satire differs from comedy in its mode of address: that is, the former attacks the vices of men directly; whereas the latter attacks them only obliquely.

Those satires are the most agreeable, in which the follies of fops, hypocrites, misers, and other contemptible characters, are ridiculed with delicacy, politeness, and good-humour. Yet there is perhaps in almost every satire a tincture of malignity.

A lampoon is supposed to be a personal invective. Etymologists derive this word from the French *lampon*, a bacchanalian song, or from *lamper* to carouse.

The principal satirists among the ancient Romans were Horace, Persius, and Juvenal. Ho-
race

race is pleasant and facetious; Persius is grave, formal, and obscure; Juvenal is warm, violent, and severe.

The most eminent satirists among the moderns are Regnier and Boileau in French; Dryden, Young, and Pope, in English. Pope is incomparably the best writer on the subject.



X.

A SMALL ALTERATION PROPOSED,
AT THE
CONCLUSION OF MILTON'S PARADISE LOST.

MILTON, near the conclusion of his Paradise Lost, has the following lines:

They looking back, all th' eastern side beheld
Of Paradise, so late their happy seat,
Wav'd over by that flaming brand, the gate
With dreadful faces throng'd, and fiery arms.
Some natural tears they dropp'd, but wip'd them soon;
The world was all before them, where to choose
Their place of rest, and Providence their guide.

"If I might presume," says Mr. Addison,
"to offer the smallest alteration in this divine
work, I should think the poem would end better
with the passage here quoted, than with the two
verses which follow:"

"They, hand in hand, with wand'ring steps and slow,
Through Eden took their solitary way."

"These two verses," continues this excellent
critic, "though they have their beauty, fall
very much below the foregoing passage, and re-
new, in the mind of the reader, that anguish,
which

which was pretty well laid by this consideration :”

“ The world was all before them, where to choose
Their place of rest, and Providence their guide †.”

Mr. Addison’s observation is certainly just.
The sentence of expulsion was to be pronounced
with some comfortable intimations :

“ Dismiss them not disconsolate,”

b. xi. 113.

said the Almighty, when he gave his orders to
Michael,

— “ Send them forth, though sorrowing, yet in peace.”

b. xi. 117.

Dr. Bentley, in order to remove the fore-
going objection, corrects the two concluding lines
in this manner :

“ Then, hand in hand, with social steps, their way
Thro’ Eden took, with heav’nly comfort chear’d.”

No reader of taste, I presume, would wish to
adopt this frigid alteration; and none, I think,

† Spect. No. 369.

would desire to expunge, the two beautiful lines, with which Milton concludes his poem. They give us a lively and natural representation of the melancholy state of our first parents, and the reluctance, with which they left the delightful scenes of Paradise; and as they must necessarily pass through Eden, that is, the province, in which Paradise was situated, before they proceeded, into what they called the "wild" and "inhospitable world *," I would, by all means, preserve that part of the description, altering only one word, for the sake of a better connection, and invert the order of the four concluding verses in this manner:

Some natural tears they dropp'd, but wip'd them soon;
Then, hand in hand, with wand'ring steps and slow,
 Through Eden took their solitary way.
 The world was all before them, where to choose
 Their place of rest, and Providence their guide.

Or, by placing a period at the end of the first line, the personal pronoun *they* may be retained; but the former reading, I think, is preferable.

By this alteration, the words of the poet remain, almost entirely unviolated; the beautiful

* b. xi. 284. 306.

picture of the loving, wandering, lingering, dejected pair is preserved; they are represented as gradually proceeding from the garden, through the adjoining region, into the world at large; and are finally left, as they ought to be left, under the guidance and protection of Providence.

XI.

NATURE the supreme pattern of imitation in **POETRY**, and in all other arts and sciences.

"Naturam intueamur, hanc sequamur."

Quint. viii. 3.

"First follow **NATURE**, and your judgement frame
By her just standard, which is still the same:
Unerring NATURE, still divinely bright,
One clear, unchang'd, and universal light,
Life, force, and beauty, must to all impart,
At once the source, and end, and test of Art."

Pope, *Ess. on Crit.* 68.

When we consider Nature in all her various operations, we shall find her plain, simple, and uniform. She never appears in gaudy and fantastic ornaments; never embellished with frivolous or meretricious decorations; her air and attitude are graceful; her mien is sober, grave, and venerable; her language is easy, familiar, and unaffected; her works are distinguished by their grace, harmony, and proportion; and she never displays any of those extravagant images, which frequently characterize the productions of Art.

If

If we cast our eyes over those numerous objects, which constitute the great theatre of Nature, we shall find in every one of them a beautiful order and symmetry.

The heavens display inimitable examples of magnificence and grandeur, in exact proportion to their real utility. The earth is adorned with an infinite variety of delightful landscapes and pleasing objects, which charm the eye, and entertain the imagination by that simplicity which always gratifies a sensible spectator; yet, by ten thousand repetitions, never creates satiety or disgust. We rise from a philosophical view of Nature with perfect satisfaction, and we return to it again with new delight and improvement. We may therefore conclude, that the best and the noblest pattern of imitation, in every department of human life, in every art and science, is Nature.

If the POET would follow this unerring guide, his works would not sink into oblivion with the insignificant productions of the day, but would remain, as the standards of taste and elegance, to succeeding ages. Homer, the plainest and the simplest writer of antiquity, has been admired by every judicious reader for almost 3000 years, because

cause his characters and descriptions are natural; or, as Dryden says of Chaucer, "because he followed Nature every where, and never went beyond her *." It is observed by an eminent poet, that Nature and Homer are the same †. Modern writers in the *Epopæa* have never equalled this admirable poet; because they have never been content to describe the great events, which they have selected for their subjects, with the same plain and majestic simplicity. They have attempted to embellish their poems by extravagant descriptions, incredible wonders, characters which never existed, in language composed of turgid expressions, and an endless variety of inconsistent epithets and discordant metaphors. These poetical images have no uniform appearance, no natural features, but are monsters, decorated with all the colours of the rainbow. It is no wonder, therefore, that a reader of taste should be fatigued and disgusted with such a profusion of glaring and fantastic portraits. Let any one compare the *Jerusalem* of Tasso, the *Henriade* of Voltaire, and the most elaborate productions of some of our English

* Dryd. Pref. to Fables.

† Pope, Ess. on Crit. 135.

poets, who have attempted the Epic poem, with the Works of Homer and Virgil; and, while he is dazzled with the false brilliancy of the former, he will admire the ease and simplicity of the latter.

If the **DRAMATIC WRITER** would follow Nature, he would never introduce his speakers declaiming in a wild, turgid, and poetic language, in their conversation on the stage. We should think it extremely unnatural, if a person, in the deepest affliction, should express the anguish of his mind in measured periods, florid similes, and splendid metaphors; and we can see no reason, why these things should be thought allowable in scenes of tragical distress. The simile at the end of every act, which was usual with some of our best poets of the last age, has been justly exploded. For the same reason, tragedies in rhyme have been condemned as grotesque and affected compositions.

If the **HISTORIAN** would follow the plain and simple track, which he is directed to pursue by Nature and the order of things, his narrative would be read with more pleasure and advantage; the reader would be equally delighted and instructed. Instead of which we have historians,
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who have embarrassed their narrative by perplexing digressions, flowery descriptions, and an elaborate, formal, and pedantic diction. Never content with a familiar and easy representation of facts in their proper order, they confound the reader's imagination by an impertinent display of rhetorical embellishments.

Would the **SPEAKER** on the **STAGE** attentively consider the character he represents, and the passions he wishes to express, he would never "overstep," as Shakespeare expresses it, "the modesty of Nature *;" he would never vociferate in scenes, where the pathos is delineated; he would never rant in the depth of sorrow and affliction, nor ever declaim in a soliloquy, where the hero, in a tragedy, must be supposed to be in a sedate and contemplative attitude. Nothing can be more shocking to a judicious auditor, than to hear a person, who represents the grave philosophic Cato, speaking his famous soliloquy, with Plato on the Immortality of the Soul before him, in a loud, fantastic, oratorical tone, pointing at the heavens, while he says,

* Hamlet iii. 3.

"The stars shall fade away, the sun himself
Grow dim with age."

Shakespeare introduces Henry VI. thus addressing Cardinal Beaufort, in his dying moments:

"Lord Cardinal, if thou think'st on heaven's bliss,
Hold up thy hand, make signal of that hope."

If an actor should repeat this pathetic address with the least degree of negligence, loudness, or rapidity, we should be shocked at his absurdity. Nature tells us, that he should address the dying man in a calm, soft, and sympathetic tone; and that he should wait some time, before he starts back with concern and affliction, and pronounces this awful sentence,

"He dies, and makes no sign!"

Would the **SPEAKER** in the **HOUSE** condescend to follow the dictates of Nature, we should not see so many parliamentary orators, assuming a formal aspect, using a vociferous tone, or swinging their arms, like a peasant brandishing his flail.

If the **PREACHER**, in his discourses to the people, would observe the rules of propriety and decorum, which Nature prescribes, he would not

not appear like an affected coxcomb; nor address his audience, like some fanatical declaimers, with a rueful countenance, a clamorous voice, a canting tone, or a puritanical formality. The air of levity and the gloomy aspect are equally absurd. The christian orator should deliver his arguments and exhortations, with a gentle deportment *, a sober dignity, and a manly freedom.

Every man therefore, who either writes for posterity, or speaks in public, should pay a strict attention to this excellent maxim: FOLLOW NATURE.

* Behold my servant, whom I have chosen: he shall not strive nor cry, neither shall any man hear his voice in the streets.—Mat. xii. 18. 19. 20.—In the words of Dr. Clarke, “he shall preach true religion, in all meekness, gentleness, and humility.” Paraphrase on the place.

F I N I S.

LONDON: Printed by LUKE HANSARD,
Nº 6, Great Turnstile, Lincoln's-Inn-Fields.



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